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CONVAIR ASTRONAUTICS

CONVAIR DIVISION OF GENERAL DYNAMICS CORPORATION

ACOUSTIC EVALUATION OF A WATER-COOLED FLAME BUCKET

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FOREWORD

The purpose of this test was two fold. An acoustic evaluation of a water-cooled flame bucket was desired so that both near and far field noise reduction effects could be determined. An effort was made to simulate water flow conditions that would result from gravity flow from a large reservoir over a set of four weirs.

Test results are presented in graphical form for microphones located in both near and far field locations. Analysis of the data indicates an optimum water flow rate to exist for various locations in the acoustic field. An attempt is made to explain the phenomenon in terms of theoretical relationships and properties of the fluid flow. Suggestions are made for further analysis of these test results as well as future studies. Several modifications are proposed for the present test equipment.

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SUMMARY

→ A series of small-scale model rocket tests was performed to evaluate the acoustical performance of water-cooled flame buckets. Data collected from these tests indicated the change in sound pressure level is a function of water flow-rate ratios for locations in both the near and far field. () The water flow-rate ratio is defined as: water flow rate / propellant flow rate. Reductions of up to 12 db in the noise level were observed in the 1200-2400 cps band for conditions in the far field with a water flow-rate ratio of 3.33/1. This octave band converts to a Strouhal number of 0.045, which lies within the peak of generalized data from previously reported tests. The Strouhal number = $f_m \frac{d}{U}$, where f_m is the mean geometric frequency of a particular octave band, d is the rocket exit diameter in feet, and U the rocket exhaust mean velocity in feet/second.

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INTRODUCTION

The proposed series of large booster rockets now under consideration for space exploration presents serious problems for the static testing of rocket engines. The difficulty of transporting these large engines from the place of manufacture will require that static test sites be built close to large centers of population. The acoustic environment of such a situation would be intolerable if measures were not taken to modify the test site. These modifications should result in a change in directivity of the acoustic field and a reduction in the acoustic power at the source.

The present test was intended to be exploratory in nature and to indicate whether the direct injection of water into a flame bucket would be an efficient and practical means of noise reduction.

DESCRIPTION OF TEST PROGRAM

The model rocket engines used in this test had an exit diameter of 1.5 inches. The weight flow of propellants per engine was 0.75 pounds per second, and the jet stream power was approximately 3.4×10^5 watts (Reference 1). Two engine operation was used at all times during the test.

The flame bucket was designed and developed by the Thermodynamics Laboratory of General Dynamics/Convair (Reference 2). A sketch of the flame bucket is shown in Figure 1. The water injection system was designed to simulate gravity flow over a set of four weirs. Figure 2 shows an overall view of the test site during a typical run. The microphones were covered with thin plastic bags to protect them against water damage when not used for data taking. This photo shows the location of microphone number 3 and will serve to show the clutter of hard surface reflectors that caused the scattering of data for this microphone location. A large metal box was constructed to act as a water reservoir, and the water flow rate was then varied by changing the static head above the weir. Figure 3 shows a test engineer preparing to calibrate the water flow rate. Water flow-rate ratios of 1.0, 1.5, 2.0, 3.0, 3.33, 5.0, and 6.0 were tested as well as the dry condition. Free field measurements were also taken to find the effects of the flame bucket on both the near and far field attenuation.

ACOUSTIC MEASUREMENTS

A block diagram of the acoustical instrumentation is shown in Figure 4a. A sketch of the microphone locations appears as Figure 5. A photograph of the test equipment installation appears as Figure 6. A basic microphone, pre-amplifier and power supply is repeated for each channel. The Altec condenser microphones were laboratory calibrated prior to the test using a Western Electric 640 AA microphone as a reference standard. The General Radio portable calibrator was used both before and after each day of testing in the field.

The tape recorder output was fed through the analysis system shown in Figure 4b. Electronic calibration signals placed onto the tape at the time of data recording were fed through the analysis system and used as reference levels. All sound pressure levels* (SPL's) are well within the linear range of the microphones. The Ampex model 601-2 tape recorder is a two-channel machine. Because run times were limited to 10 to 15 seconds, the test conditions had to be repeated three times to gather data from all microphones. Initial tests showed the data to be repeatable to within ± 1 db so this method of data collection is believed to yield consistent results.

* Sound pressure level (SPL) in decibels is equal to $20 \log \frac{P}{P_0}$ where P is the rms sound pressure being measured and P_0 is the reference pressure of 0.0002 dyn/cm^2 .

Visual observation of the water spray pattern when the flame bucket was in operation indicated that it would not be possible to place the microphones in all necessary locations to probe the acoustic field and determine the acoustic power. Microphone number 1 was moved to an alternate location during this series of firings to prevent any possibility of damage from water blast. Figures 7 and 8 were taken in sequence during the operation of the flame bucket. Figure 7 was taken just before the gates were pulled with the flame bucket operating dry. Compare the relatively stable surface of the water reservoir in this figure with the highly turbulent surface as shown in Figure 8 after the gates were pulled. It appears that the water and rocket exhaust were mixing in the area of the weir. This mixing process is rather unsteady and might account for the turbulence. Apparently the high velocity efflux from the flame bucket caused water to be aspirated from the water reservoir.

Analysis of the data from microphone number 3 showed a considerable amount of scatter. This microphone was then tested and found to be in good working order. This scatter is believed to be a result of poor field conditions since there were many possible acoustic reflectors located near the microphones as previously mentioned. Microphone number 3 was kept as a spare, and the data will not be presented in this report.

Although no direct comparisons of total power reductions are possible, the present results should give indications of the potentials offered by direct water injection into the flame bucket.

DISCUSSION AND TEST RESULTS

A recent paper by Cole, England and Powell (Reference 3) discusses the effect of various exhaust blast deflectors on the acoustic characteristics of a small rocket engine. They observed that although the use of flame deflectors lowered the acoustic power in the far field, higher sound pressure levels were observed in the near field close to the rocket. This would be explained by a change in location of the effective sound source and the new acoustic field caused by the altered flow pattern.

Figure 9 has been taken from Reference 3 and is included to indicate the expected reduction in acoustic power through the use of this type of flame deflector. A comparison of results for both free-field and dry flame bucket configurations is shown in Figure 10. Microphone number 2 is well within the near field of the rocket engine and shows the marked dependence of SPL on distance in that regime. All of the spectra presented in this figure display a marked peak in the 1200-2400 cps band. This is in good agreement with the generalized data presented in Reference 4 when the frequency is presented in non-dimensional form as a Strouhal number. The Strouhal number = $f_m \frac{d}{U}$, where f_m is the mean geometric frequency of a particular octave band, d is the rocket exit diameter in feet, and U the rocket exhaust mean velocity in feet/second.

Figures 11 to 15 present octave band SPL's for all field locations where good data was obtained. Figure 11a shows that reductions in the order of 12 db in the near field are possible with a water flow-rate ratio of only 2.0/1. It is interesting to note that increasing the water flow-rate ratio to 6.5/1 did not yield any further noise reductions in this octave band. A similar trend is seen for microphone number 5 (radial distance 40 feet) although

the optimum water flow-rate ratio for this octave band has shifted to 3.33/1 (See Figure 14b). Note that for conditions in the far field, at least, increasing the water flow past the optimum condition resulted in an increase in SPL. This effect was more noticeable in the 1200-2400 cps band where peaking in the data was observed before. This same information is presented in another form in Figure 16 to 20 where SPL's from various microphone locations are plotted as a function of water flow-rate ratio. Both overall and octave band data are presented.

A series of close-up photographs of flame bucket performance was taken during the test and are presented in Figures 21 through 24. These photographs show dry operation and water flows of 1.0/1, 2.0/1 and 2.0/1, respectively. These same close-up scenes may be seen in a short film made of these tests (Reference 5).

Figure 25 will serve as the first of a set of 3 summary plots. Overall sound pressure levels are plotted as a function of water flow-rate ratio for microphones 1, 2, 4 and 5. This figure shows that different water flow rates will prove optimum for various distances under consideration. This same information is presented in Figure 26 plotted as a function of radial distance from the flame bucket. Note that doubling the distance from the microphone resulted in a 6 db drop of sound pressure level. This would be indicative of far field locations. Microphone number 2 (at a distance of 5 feet from the flame bucket exhaust) and microphone number 5 (at a distance of 40 feet) were located on the same ray from the flame bucket. Microphone number 4 was located well below its ideal location (if it were to be on this same ray) and the data reflects the non-uniform acoustic field.

Figure 27 shows the sound pressure level relative to dry operation for a number of different water flows. This information is presented

as a function of the dimensionless frequency parameters (Strouhal number). Data from large rocket engines (Reference 4) show a peak in the sound pressure level spectrum for Strouhal numbers of 0.02 to 0.04. Figure 27 indicates a reduction of approximately 10 db in the noise level for this range of frequencies.

The basic theory of Lighthill (References 6 and 7) predicts the sound power of turbulent jets to vary as

$$P \sim \frac{\rho_j^2 d^2 U^8}{\rho_o c_o^8}$$

ρ_j - mean density of the jet

ρ_o - mean density of free stream

d - diameter of the nozzle

U - mean velocity of the jet

c_o - mean speed of sound in the free stream

This theoretical result does not account for high speed flows where the turbulent jet becomes supersonic.

Data presented by Powell (Reference 8) indicates that the exponent of velocity is reduced from a value of 8 for low speed flow to a value of 3 for supersonic speeds. The pressure amplitude in the near field of rocket exhaust becomes great enough to cause non-linear effects thereby invalidating the classical acoustic theory.

Experimental data indicates that the efficiency of noise production of a turbulent jet varies as the fifth power of the jet Mach number, U/c_o . However, this relation could not be expected to hold for large scale rocket engines, for at a Mach number of six, all of the kinetic energy of the jet would be converted into acoustic energy.

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7 Nov. 1961

The data indicates that this efficiency approaches a value of 1% of the mechanical power of the jet for large engines. A complete theoretical explanation of these empirical observations is not available at this time. However, it might be possible to make several observations about the experiment being reported upon in this report.

The reduction in noise level due to direct injection of water into the flame bucket may be examined in relation to changes in the properties of the flow. A transfer of thermal energy between the exhaust gases and the water stream causes steam to be generated with the resultant lowering of the gas temperature and change in density of the exhaust stream. Turbulent mixing will occur between the gas stream and the water which in turn lowers the jet velocity considerably. The flame bucket acts as a diffuser which in turn lowers the exit velocity of the stream. However, this tends to increase the effective exit area of the jet stream.

There also is the possibility of a spectral change in the rocket noise as a function of water flow. This would arise from the change in effective jet velocity and its effect on the noise generating mechanism. Previous experiments (Reference 9) indicate the spectra to be flatter for lower speeds. Octave band data presented in this report is not adequate to determine whether such a change took place. Additional narrow-band data reduction would be required to determine the peak frequency present in the sound spectrum.

Density and temperature effects on the efficiency of jet noise production are still in question. References 7, 9, and 11 indicate that these effects are small when compared to the turbulent pressure fluctuations of the jet mixing process. Lighthill (Reference 6) shows, however, that a maximum value of 6 db might be expected for very hot jets. This result is a theoretical one in which the effects of both temperature and density variation are related to the

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adiabatic pressure change. The hot gas temperature is reflected in a local mean velocity of sound. This increased noise should occur in the higher octave bands. Lighthill notes that the combustion process itself should not be overlooked as a contributor to the total noise of the rocket engine.

The reason for an optimum water flow-rate ratio for far field noise reduction is not clearly understood at this time. The use of a gravity head in the water reservoir would indicate that a finite mixing rate would occur between the rocket exhaust and the cooling water. It might be possible that when the water flow rate exceeded this optimum value, the mixing process was not allowed to proceed to completion and excessive turbulence occurred at the weir. This turbulence is an additional noise source in itself. The increased reservoir head and water flow in the flame bucket could act as an acoustic reflector, thus causing higher near-field sound pressure levels in the higher frequencies and result in possible combustion instability of the rocket engines.

As a final check on the flame bucket performance, the engines were started while the bucket was completely flooded. This was done to simulate failure of the weir system. The bucket cleared itself of excess water, and normal operation was then observed. There were no acoustic measurements taken, however, because the water spray pattern was unknown and damage to the microphone was feared if left uncovered.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This test was exploratory in nature and was done to determine whether realistic reductions in noise levels would be achieved by direct water injection with the flame bucket. The results obtained show promise for both near and far field noise reduction. The flame bucket performed well during the entire series of tests. The gates operated smoothly and no hot-spots were observed on the bucket after any of the tests.

The explanation of an optimum water flow-rate ratio for far field noise reduction is not possible at this time. The mechanism of noise reduction is complex and can only be described by experimental results.

It is recommended that these studies be extended to provide additional information necessary for construction of full-scale flame buckets. Further data reduction will be required on data taken during the present series of tests to determine the extent of any shift in noise spectrum as a function of water flow-rate ratio.

The water reservoir should be enlarged and the weir system redesigned. The present configuration allows excess water to be aspirated into the flame bucket during the run which causes the water level to drop in the reservoir. This in turn causes a drop in water flow-rate ratio during the run.

The acoustic field should be probed to determine the acoustic power of the rocket engine-flame bucket combination.

Additional large-scale tests are necessary to test the validity of Strouhal type scaling laws for rocket noise. Lighthill (Reference 7) observed that the additional noise due to high temperature flow occurs

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in the higher frequencies. The present tests showed that the noise due to the turbulent jet occurred in the same octave band. It is possible that larger scale engines might show a broader band type of noise reduction since the frequencies of the turbulent flow noise would appear in a lower octave band.

Far field noise reduction studies are concerned with energy present in the lower octave bands (20-75, 75-150 and 150-300 cps). Data gathered in this test indicate the greatest potential to occur in this range of frequencies for the large scale booster rockets currently being designed. However, a word of caution is suggested in using a simple Streuhal type of scaling law to extrapolate data until further investigated.

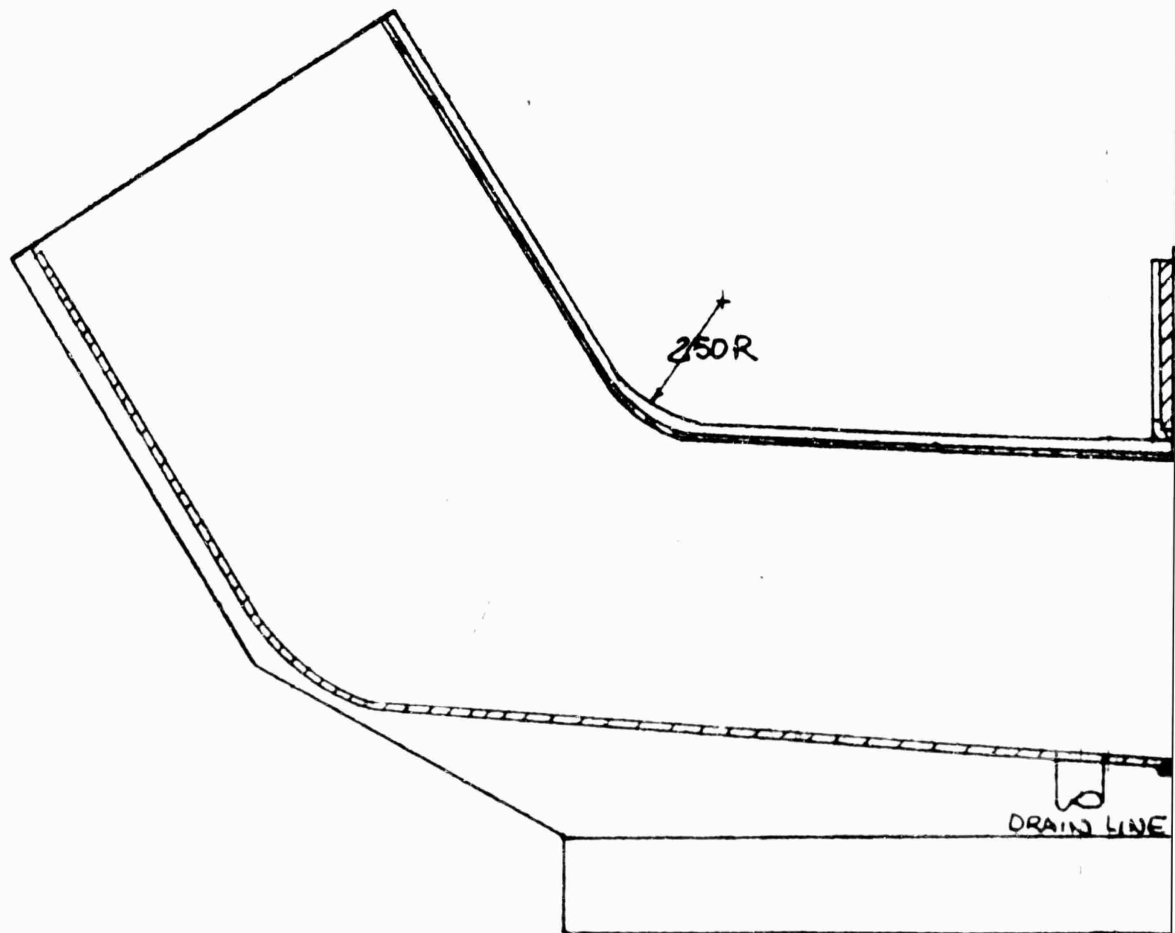
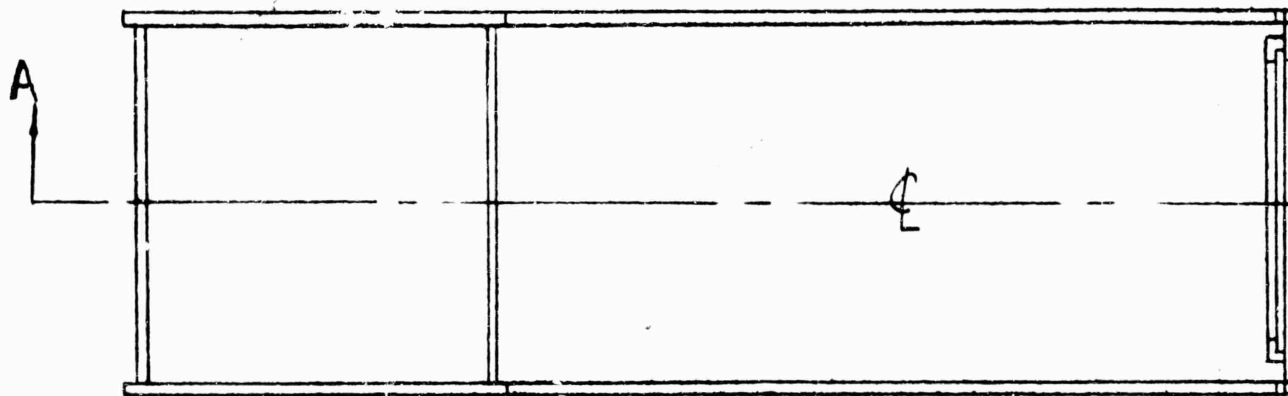
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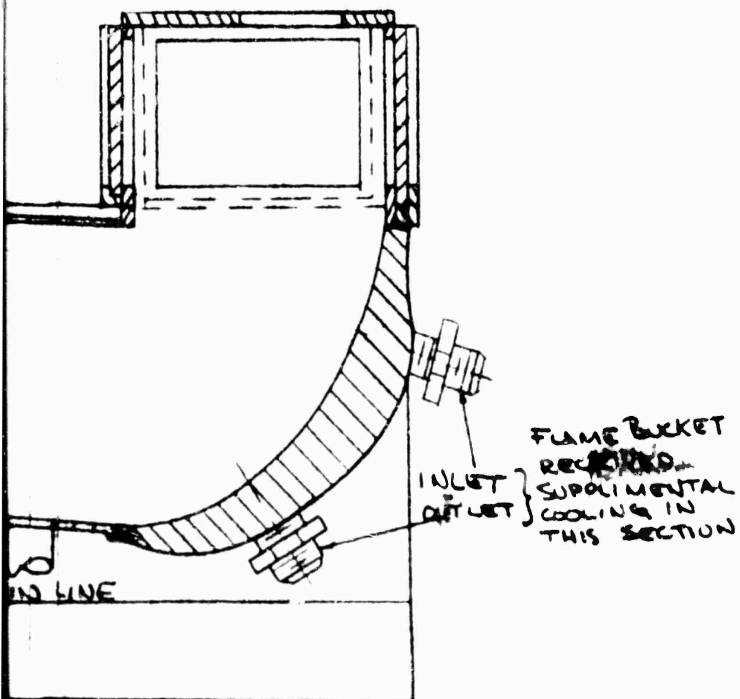
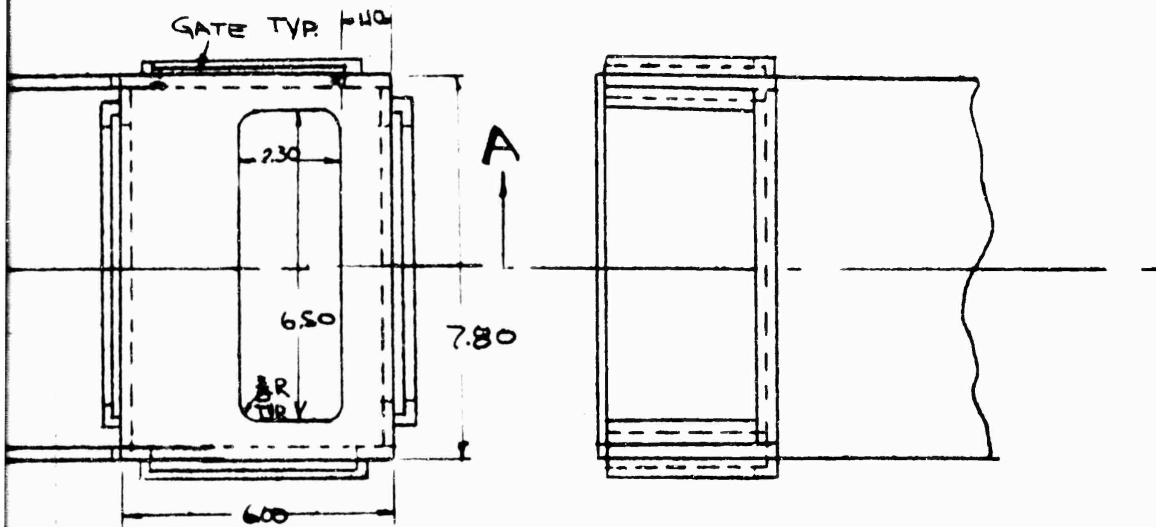
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11. Rollins, V. G., "Effects of Temperature on Jet Noise Generation", NACA TN 4217, 1958.



SECTION A



WATER COOLED FLAME BUCKET
DESIGNED BY: GD/CONVAIR THERMO-
DYNAMICS LAB
TL R&D 1089

SCALE: - 1/8

DATE: AUGUST 26, 1961

Figure 1

NOT REPRODUCIBLE

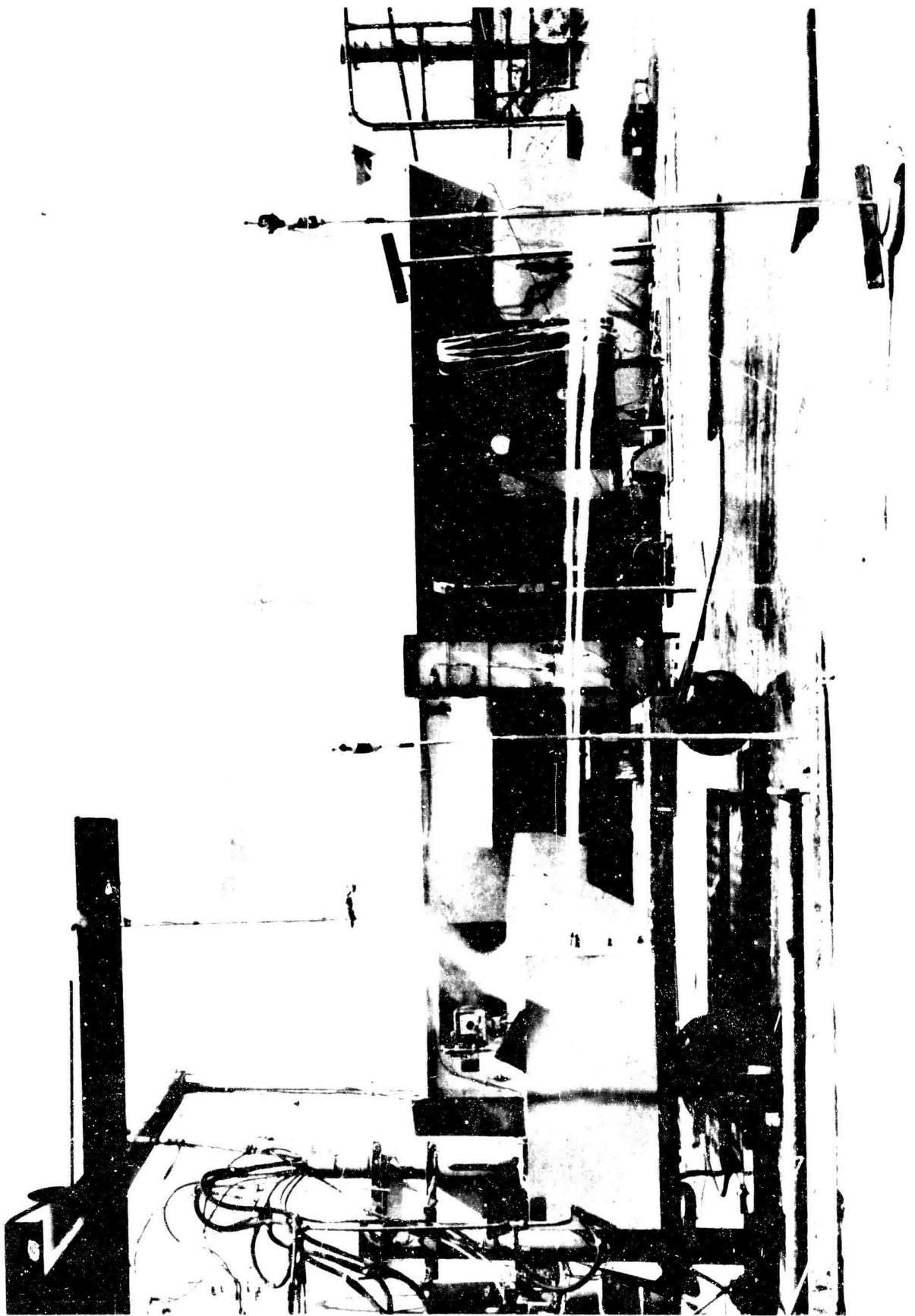


FIGURE 2 Overall View of Test Site During Typical Run
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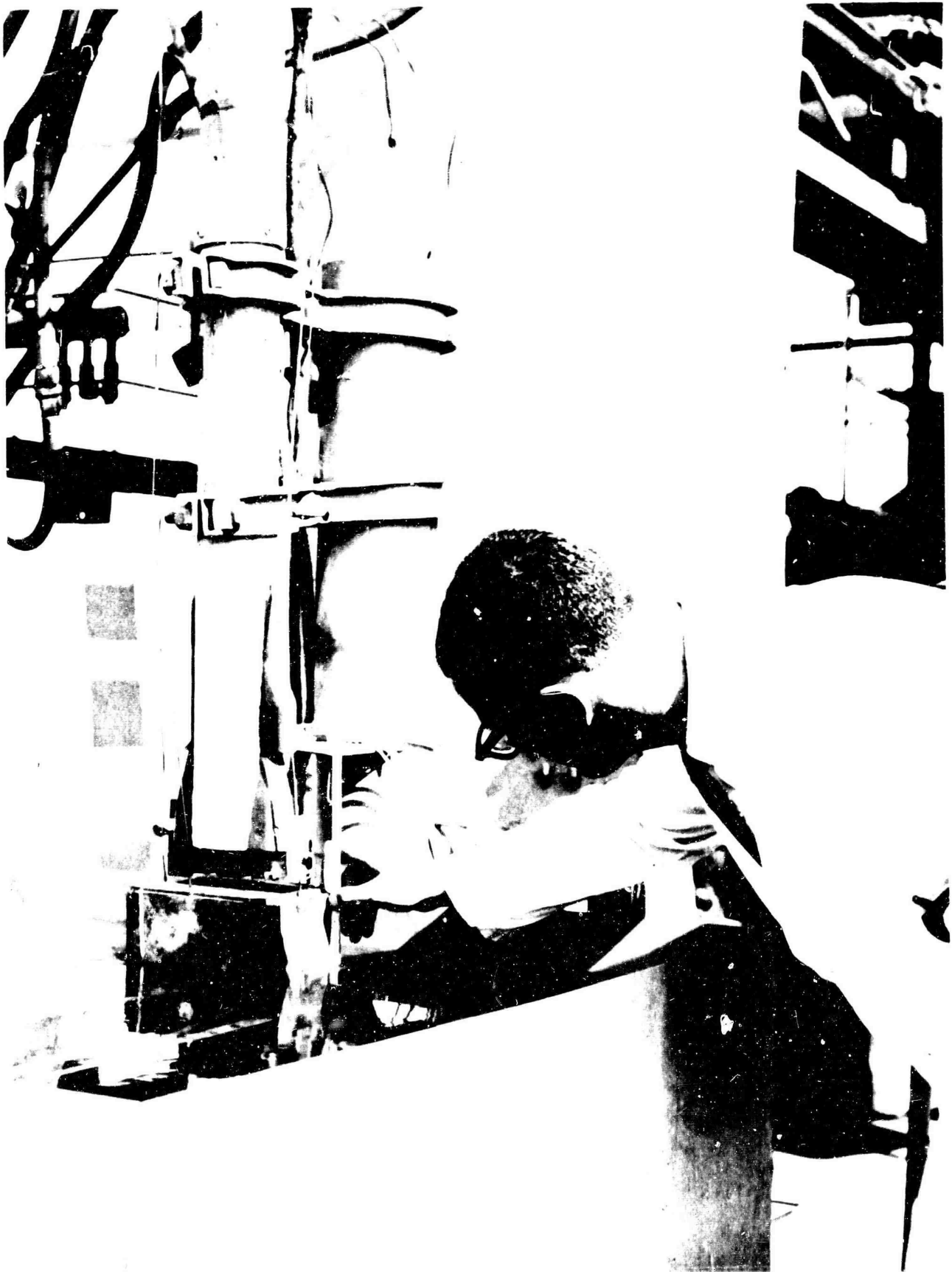


FIGURE 3 Measurement of Reservoir Static Head
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Acoustical Measurement Instrumentation

Recording

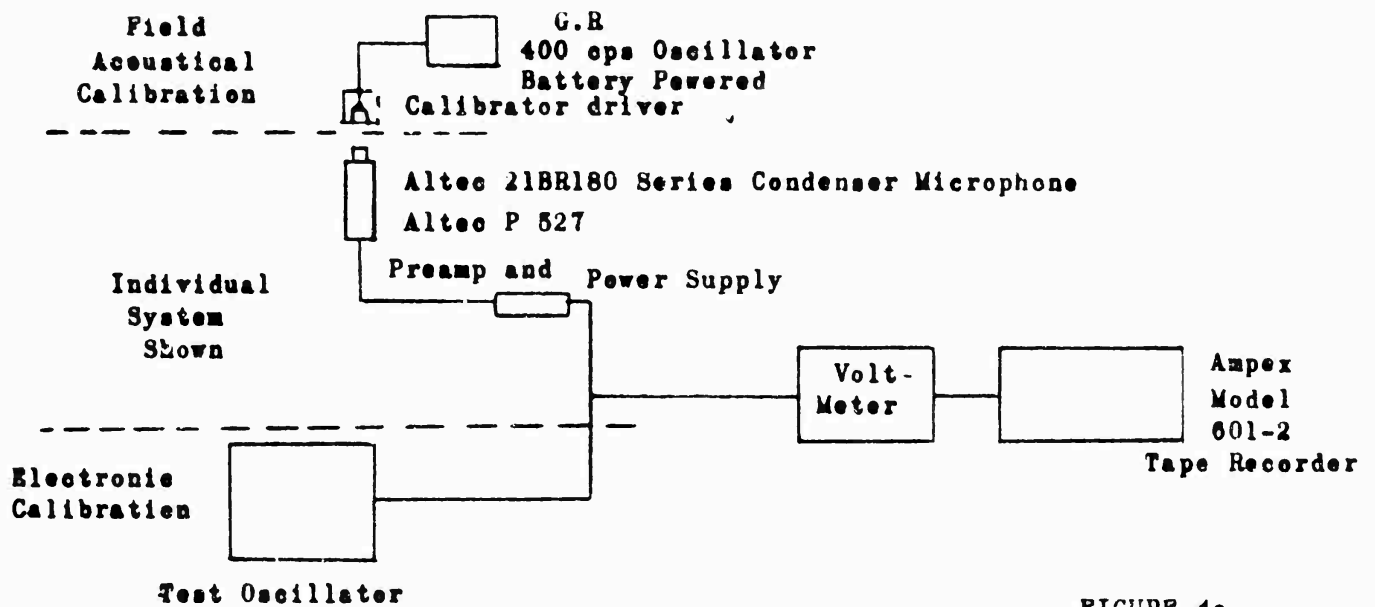


FIGURE 4a

Analysis

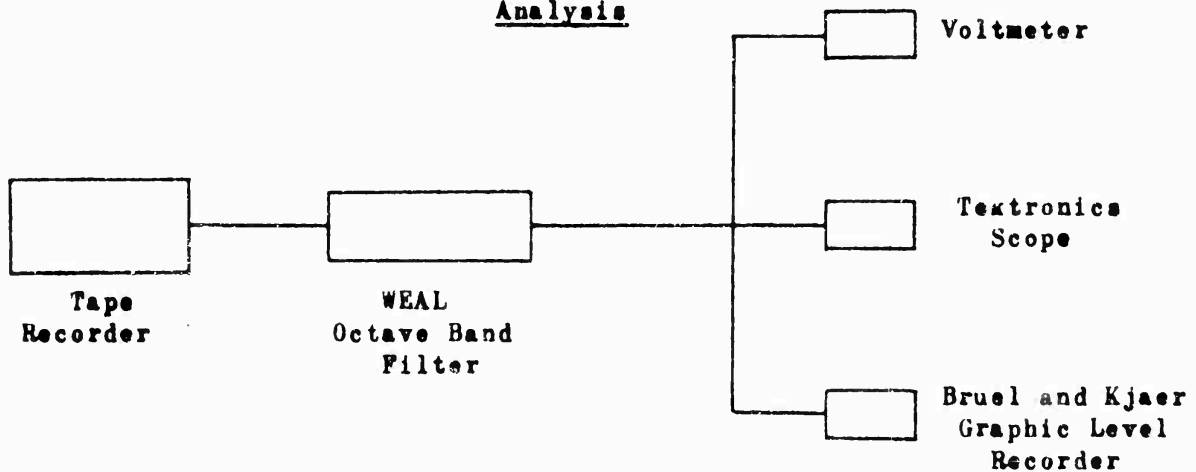


FIGURE 4b

MICROPE LOCATIONS

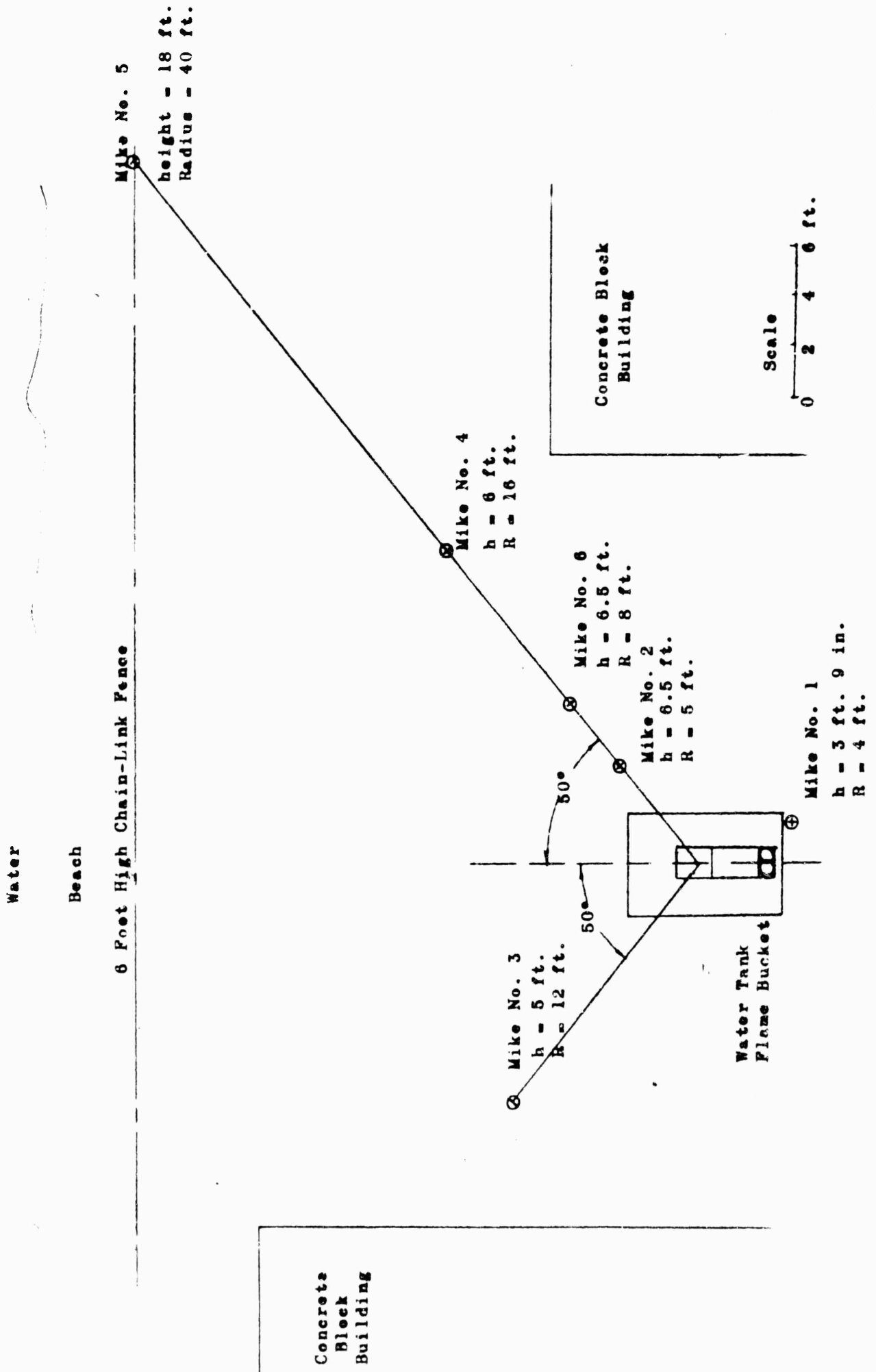


FIGURE 5

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FIGURE 6 Test Equipment Installation
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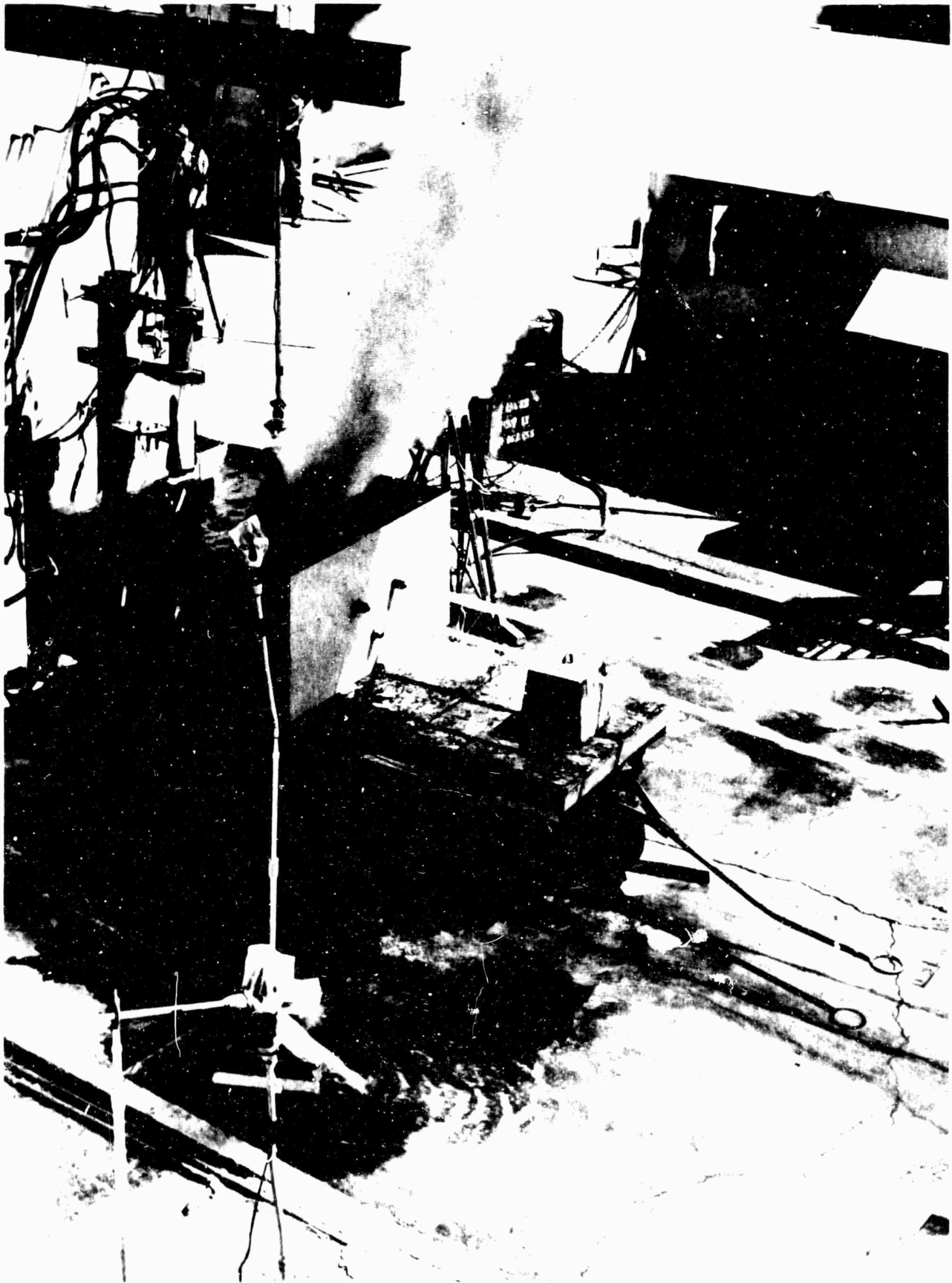


FIGURE 7 Flame Bucket Operating Dry
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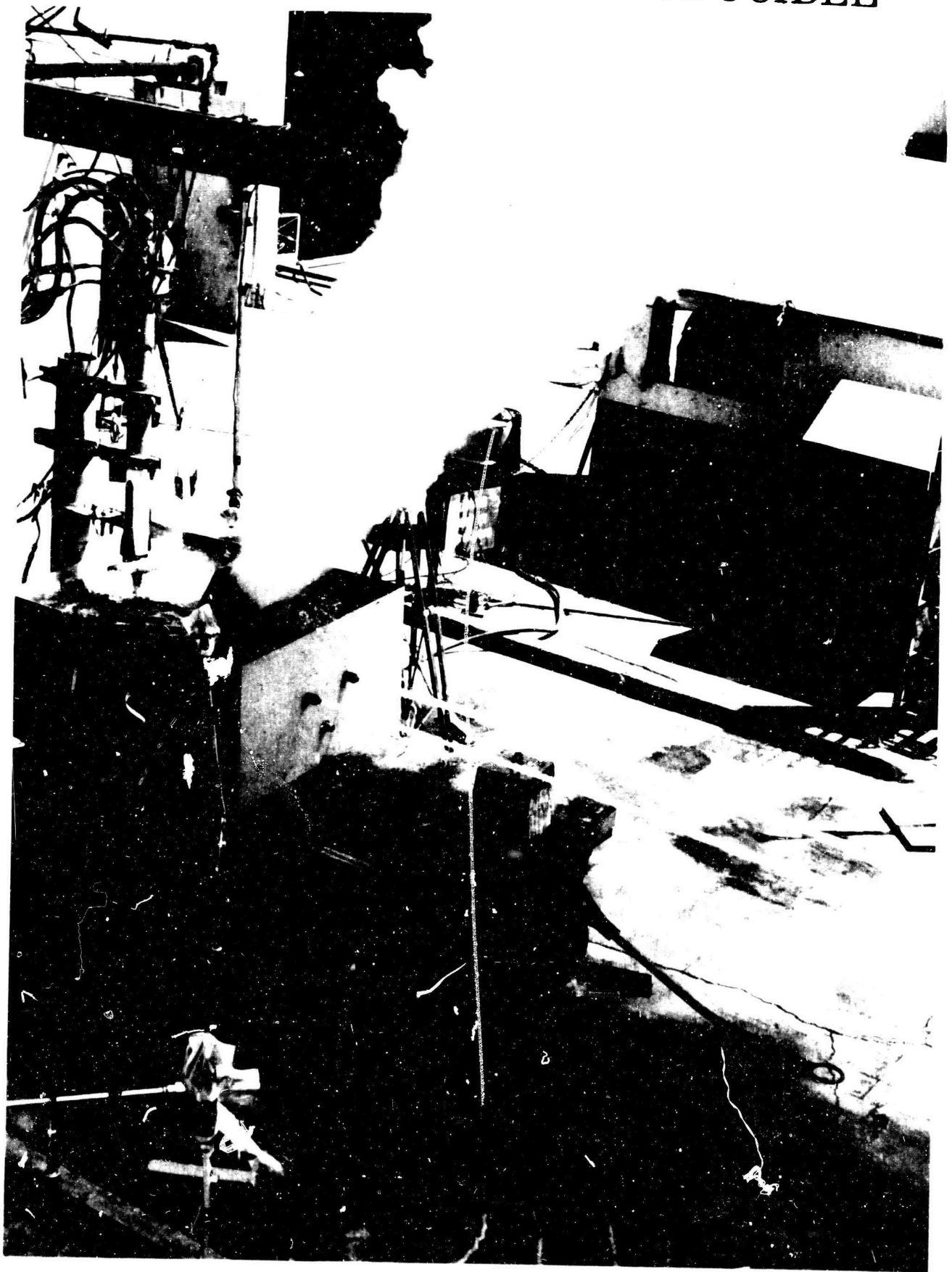


FIGURE 8 Flame Bucket Operating with Water Flow
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Page 21

EFFECT OF FLAME BUCKET ON ACOUSTIC POWER LEVEL

FROM REFERENCE 3

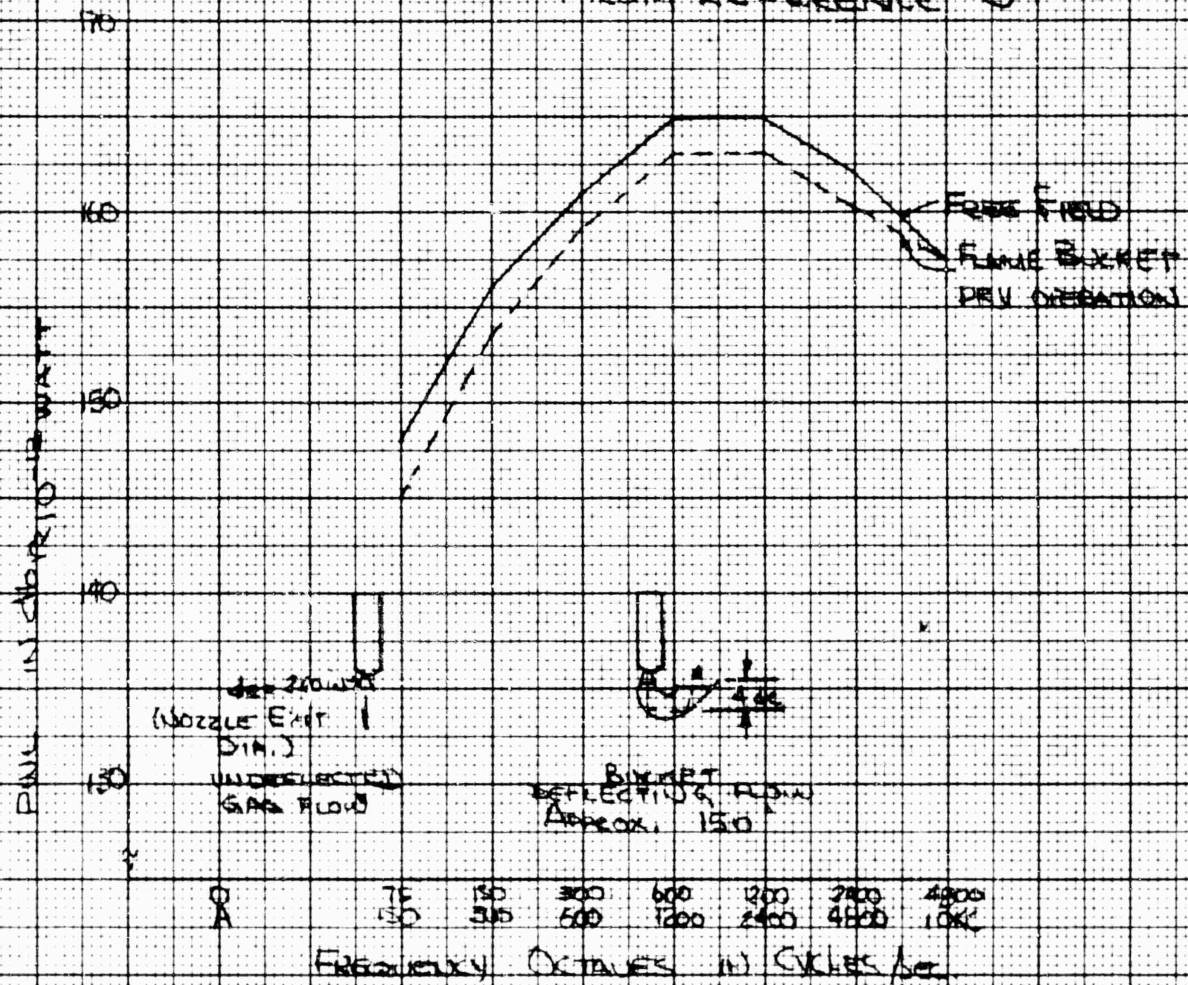


FIGURE 9

K-E
KROBERT & BROS. CO.
10 X 10 TO THE 1/2 INCH
3201-11

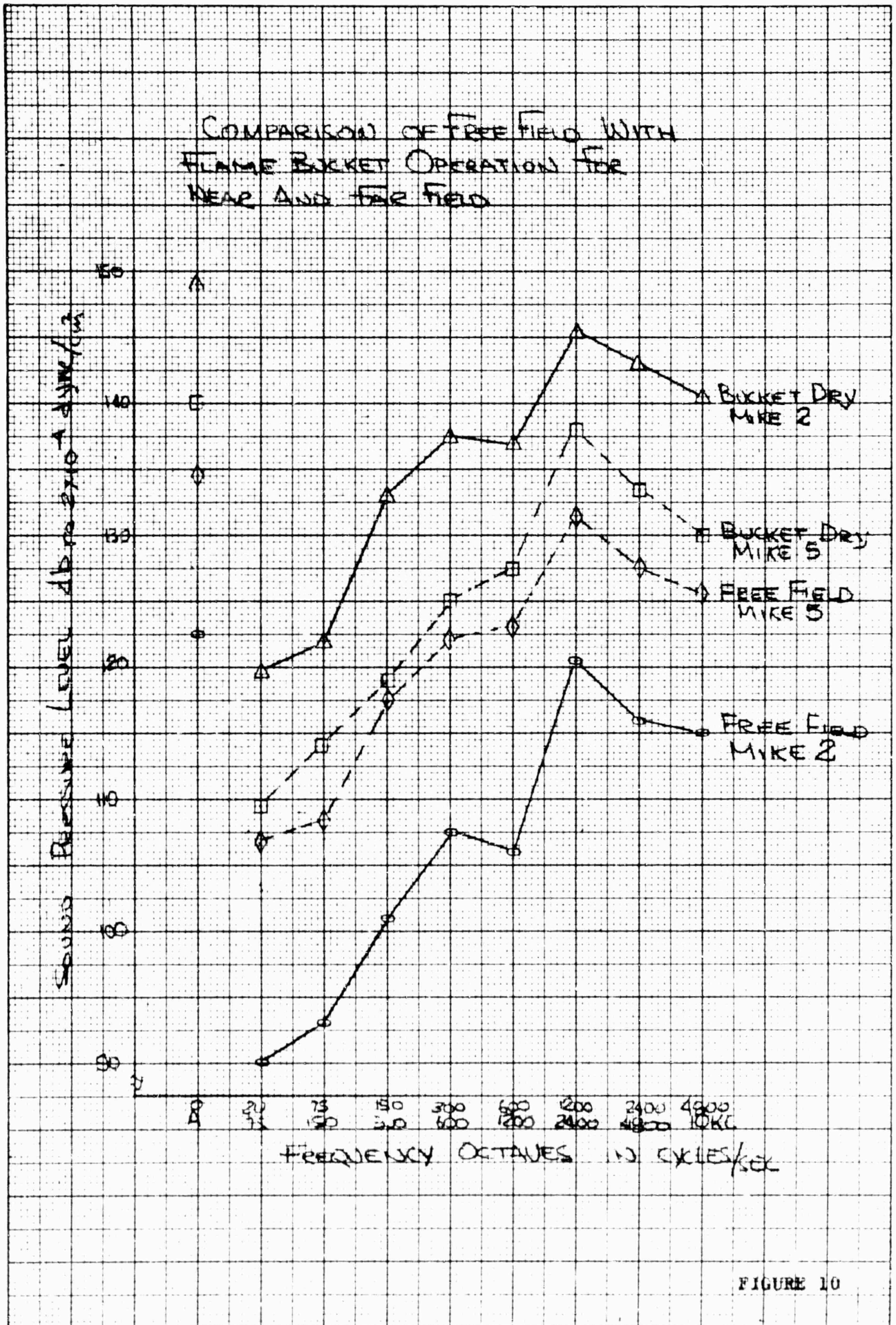


FIGURE 10

OCTAVE BAND SPL'S FOR MICROPHONE NO 1

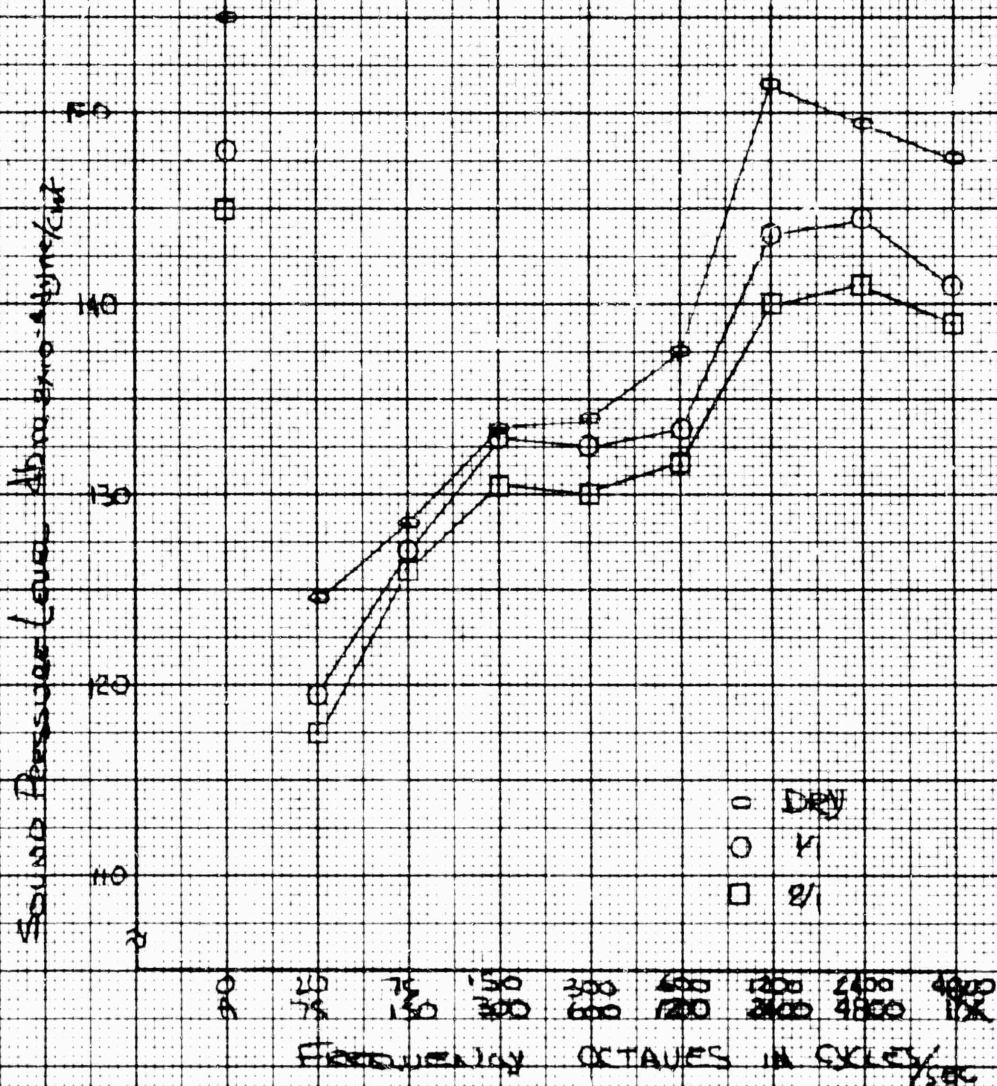


FIGURE 11A

OCTAVE BAND SPL's FOR MICROPHONE NO 1

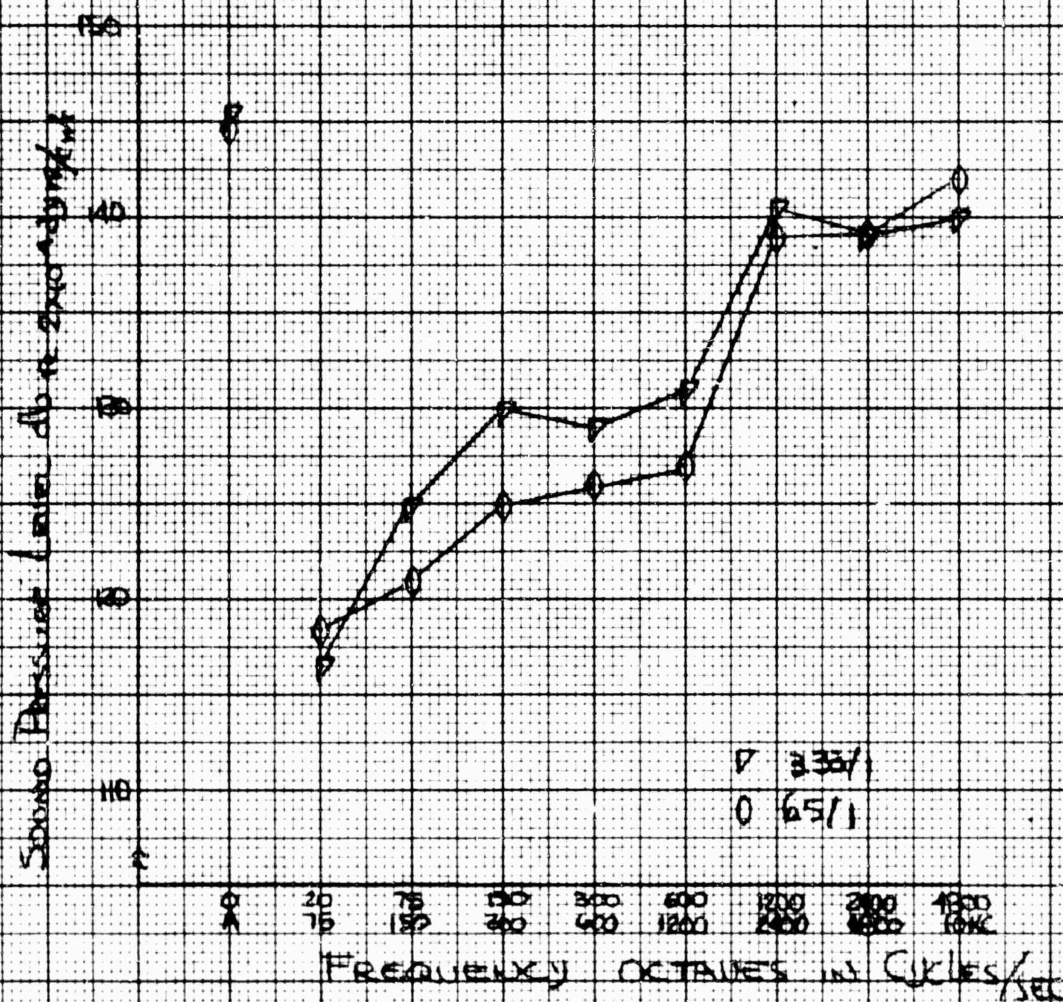


FIGURE 11b

OCTAVE BAND SPL'S FOR MICROPHONE NO 2

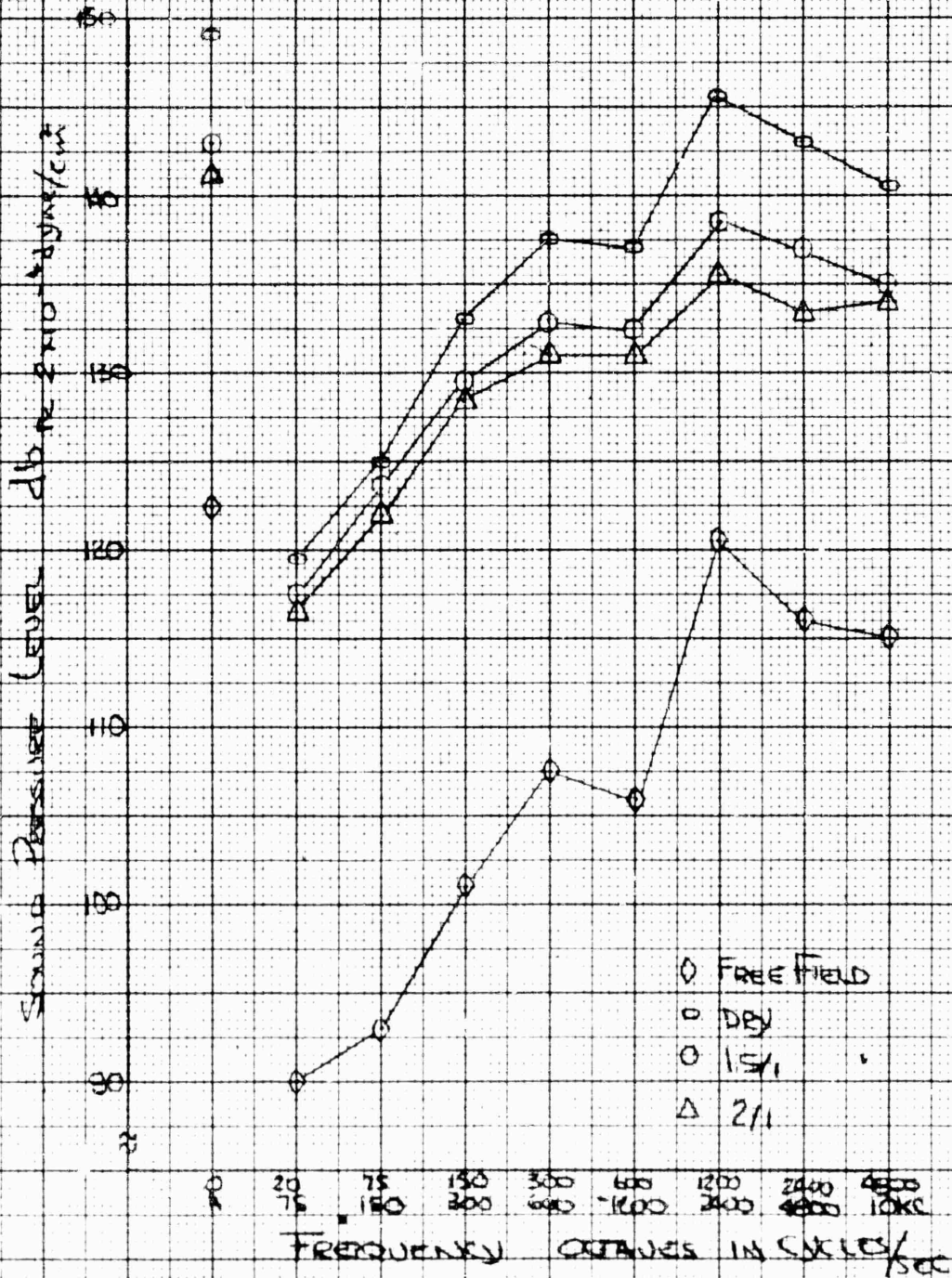


FIGURE 12a

OCTAVE BAND SPL'S FOR MICROPHONE NO 2

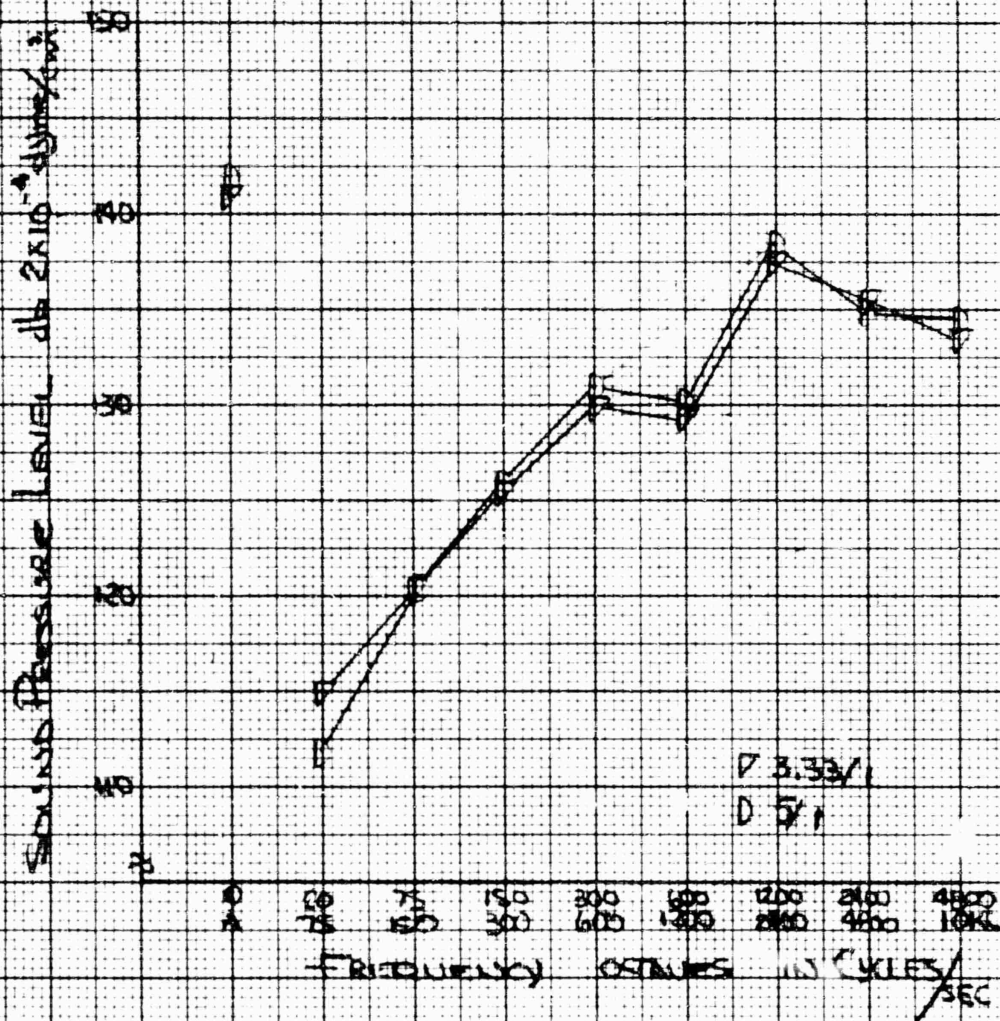


FIGURE 18b

OCTAVE BAND SPL's
FOR MICROPHONE NO. 4

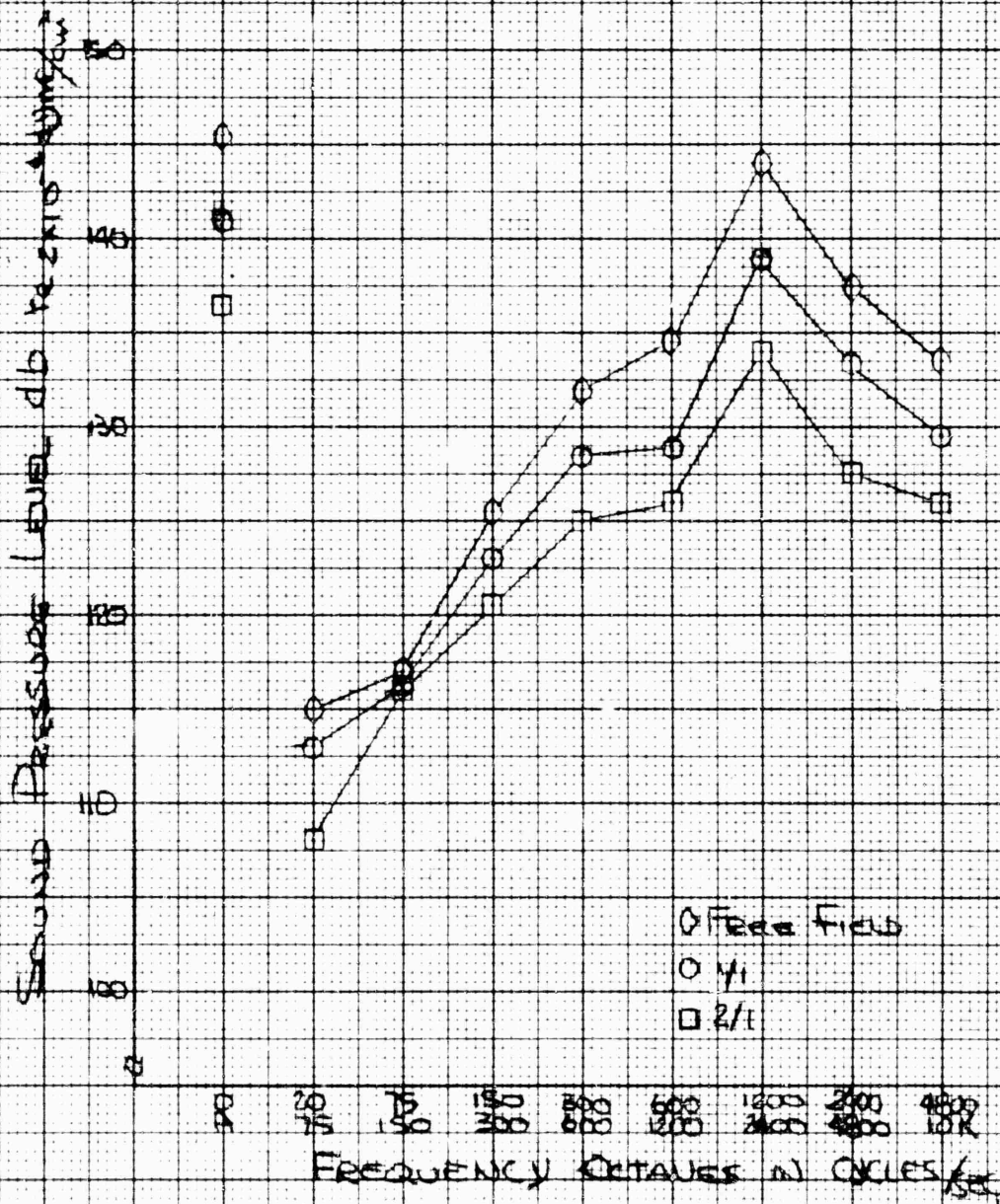


FIGURE 13A

OCTAVE BAND SPL'S FOR MICROPHONE NO 4

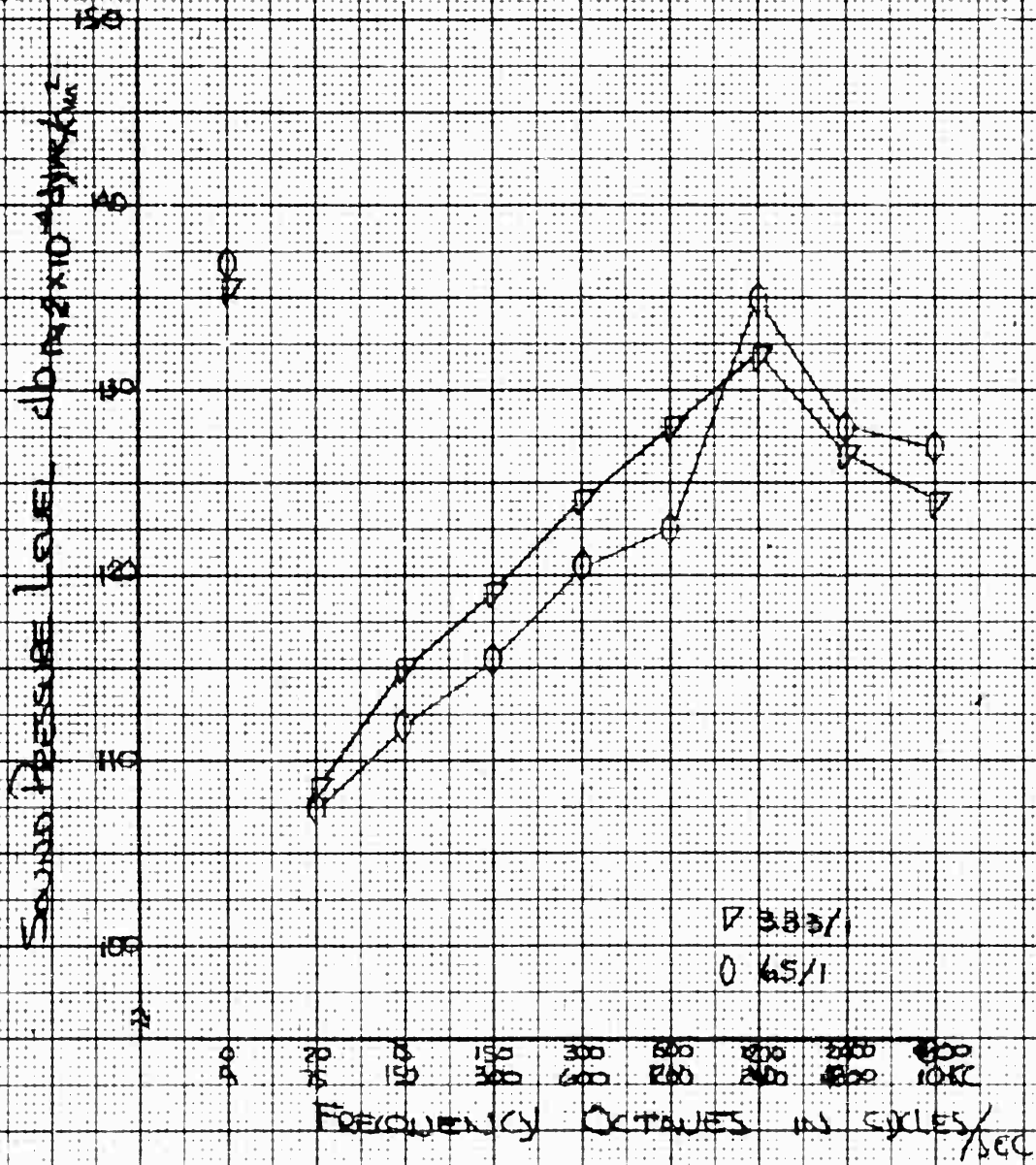


FIGURE 13b

OCTAVE BAND SPL's FOR MICROPHONE NO 5

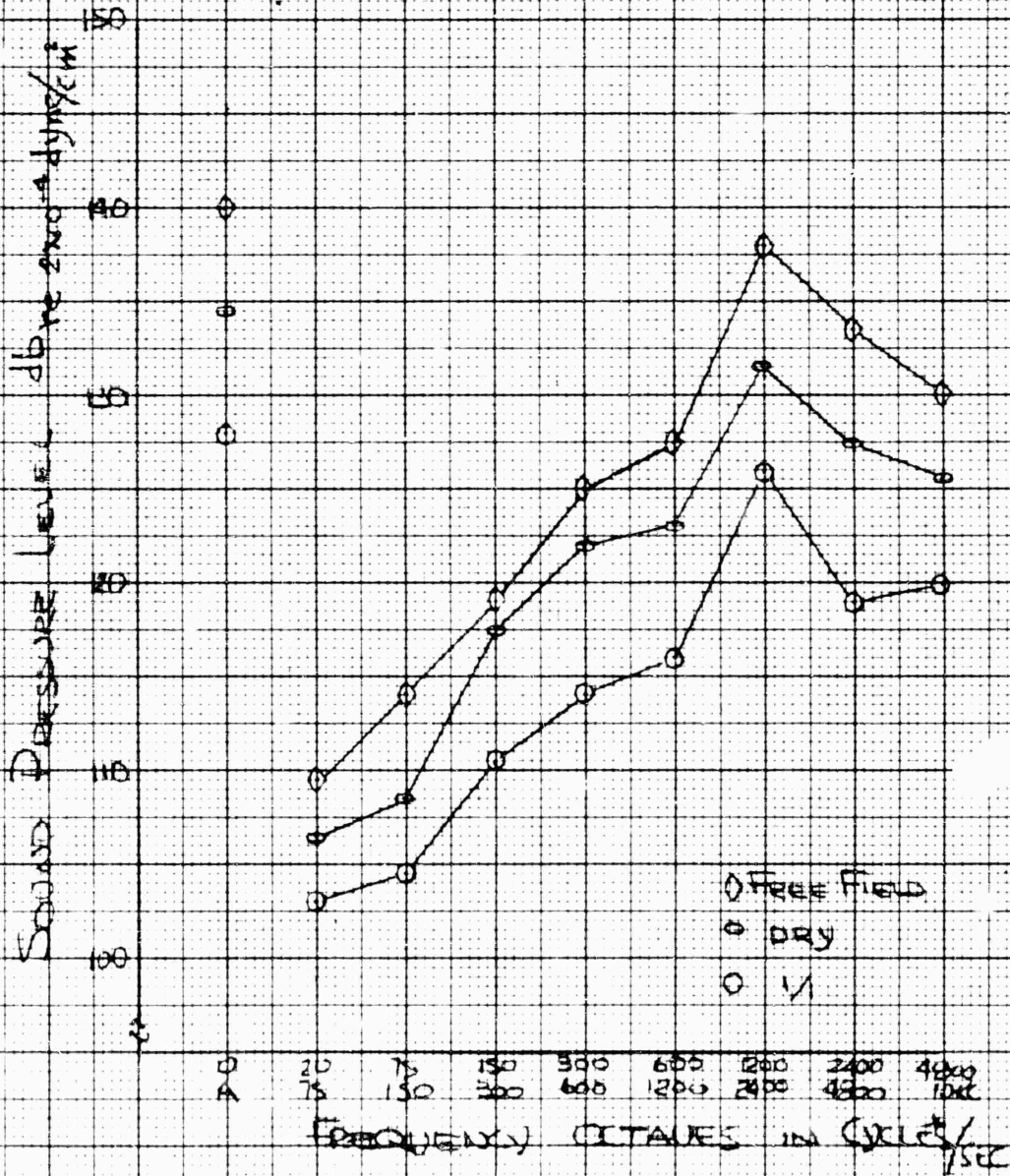


FIGURE 14a

OCTAVE BAND SPL's FOR MICROPHONE NO 5

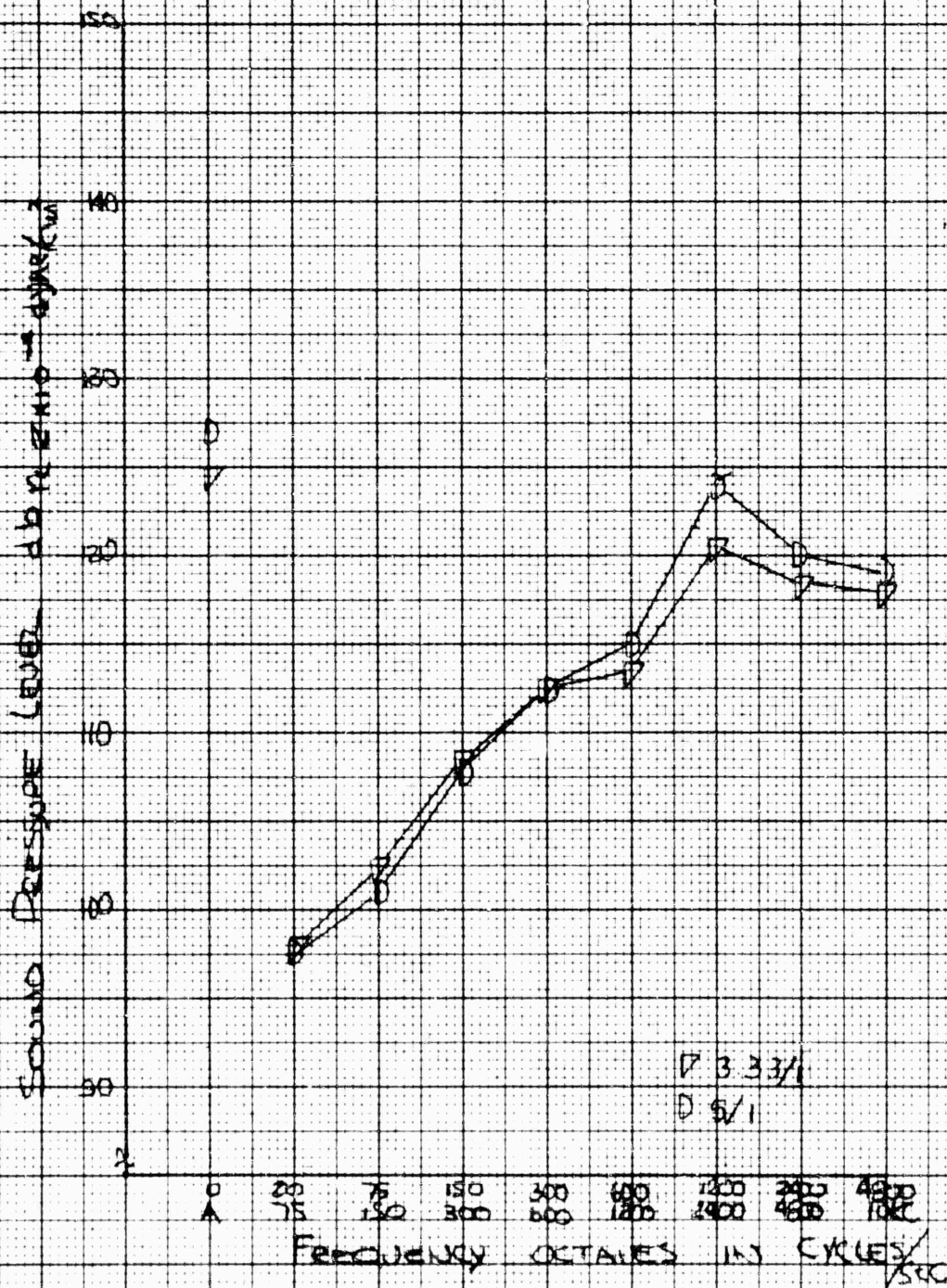


FIGURE 14b

OCTAVE BAND SPLs FOR MICROPHONE NO 6

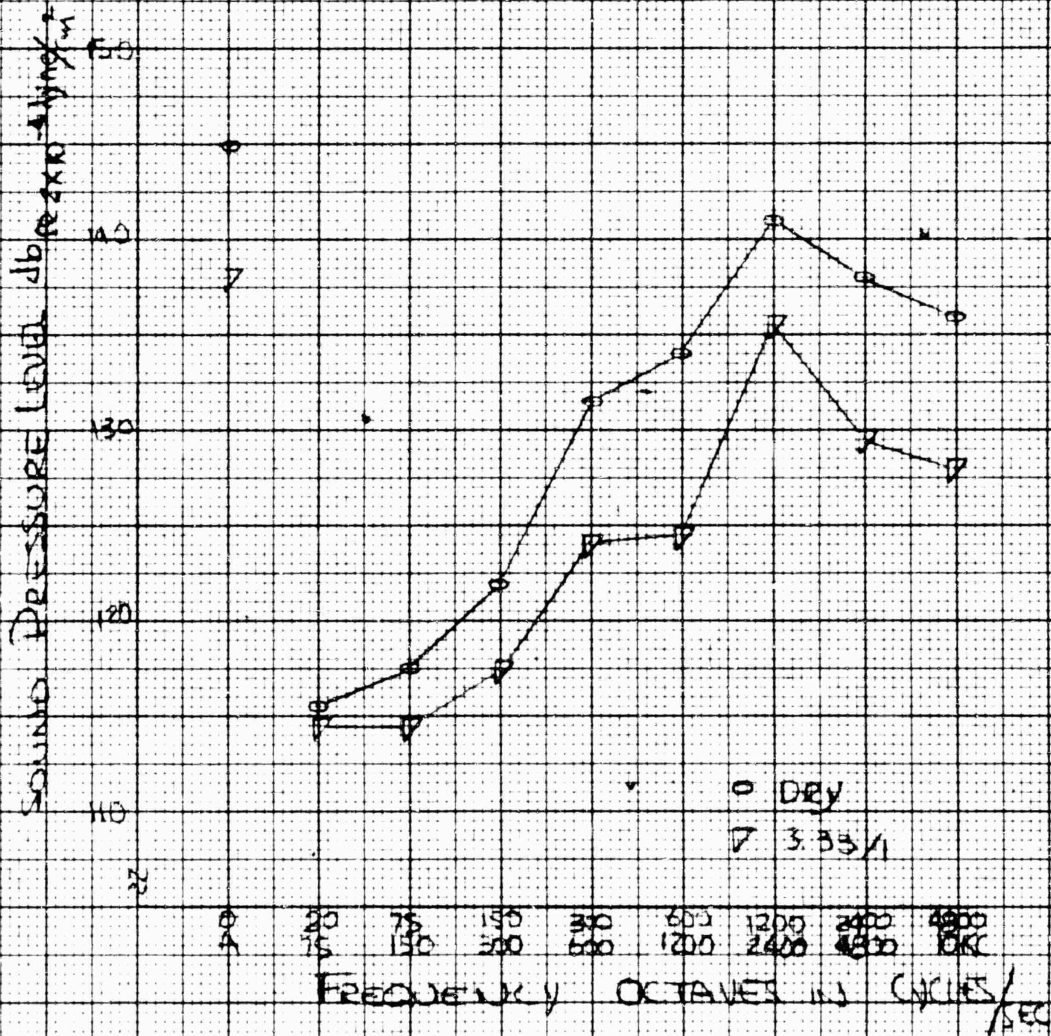
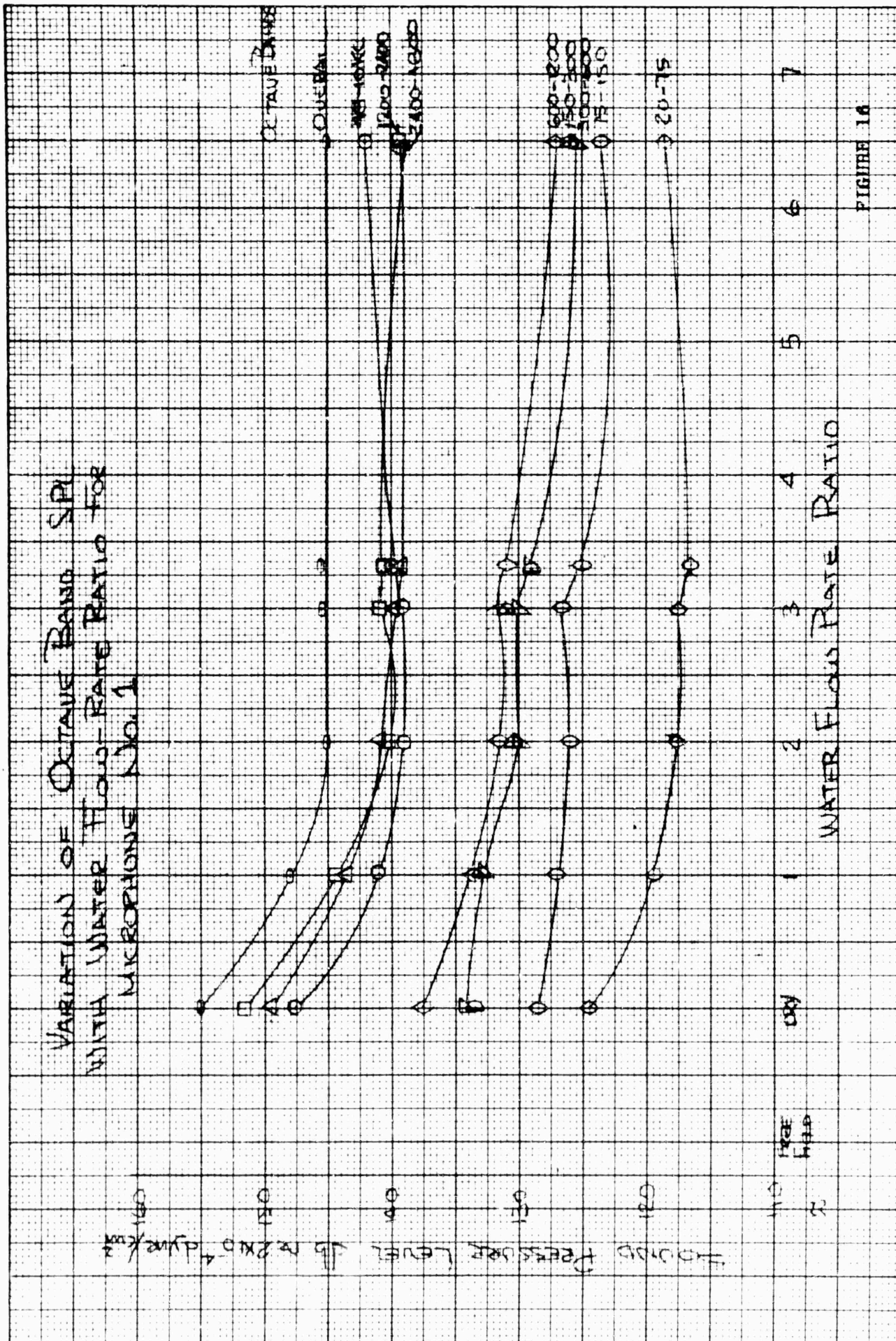
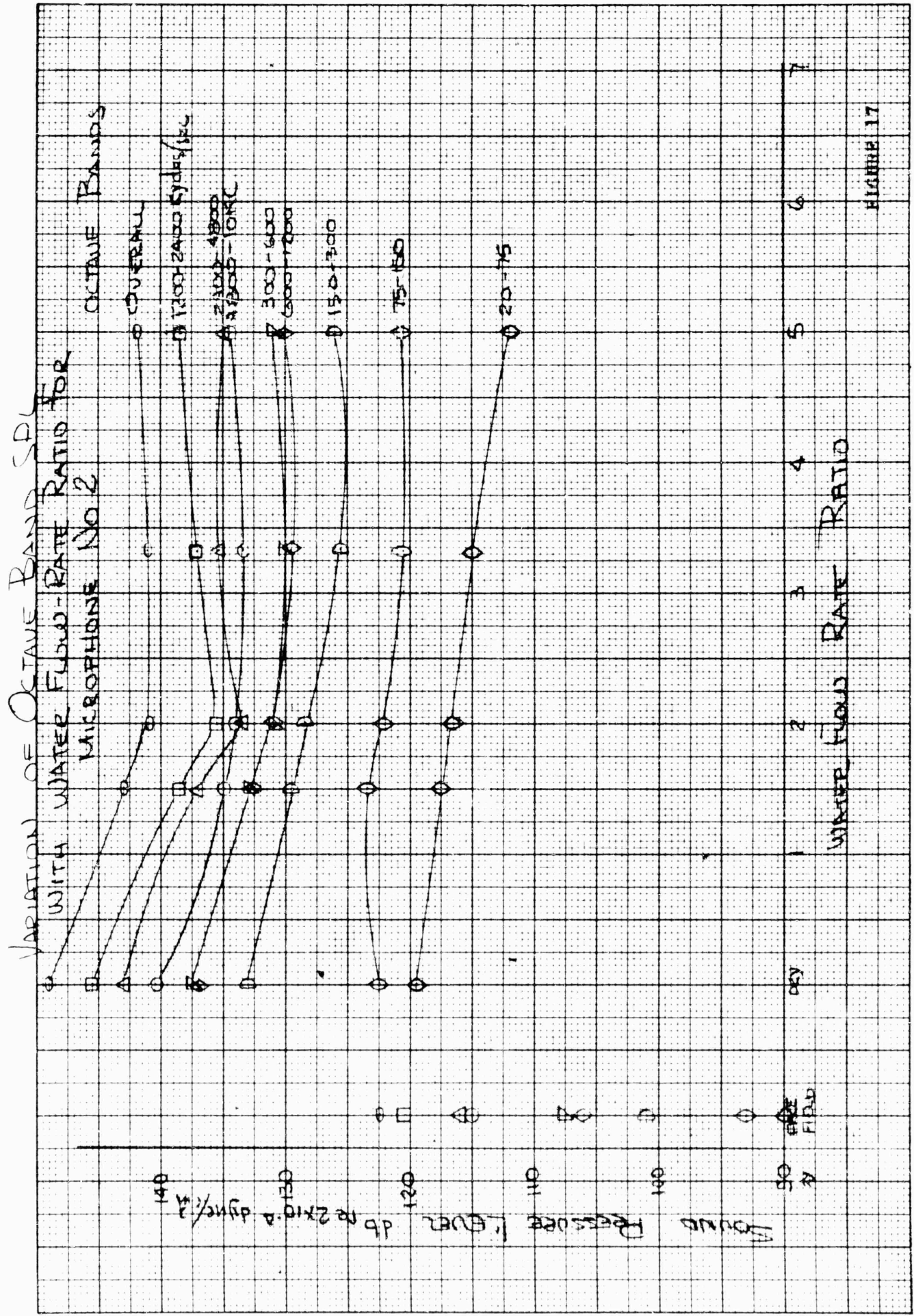


FIGURE 15





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FORM 3
10 X 10 TO THE 1/2 INCH
3229-11

VARIATION OF OCTAVE BAND SPL WITH WATER FLOW-RATE RATIO FOR MICROPHONE NO. 5

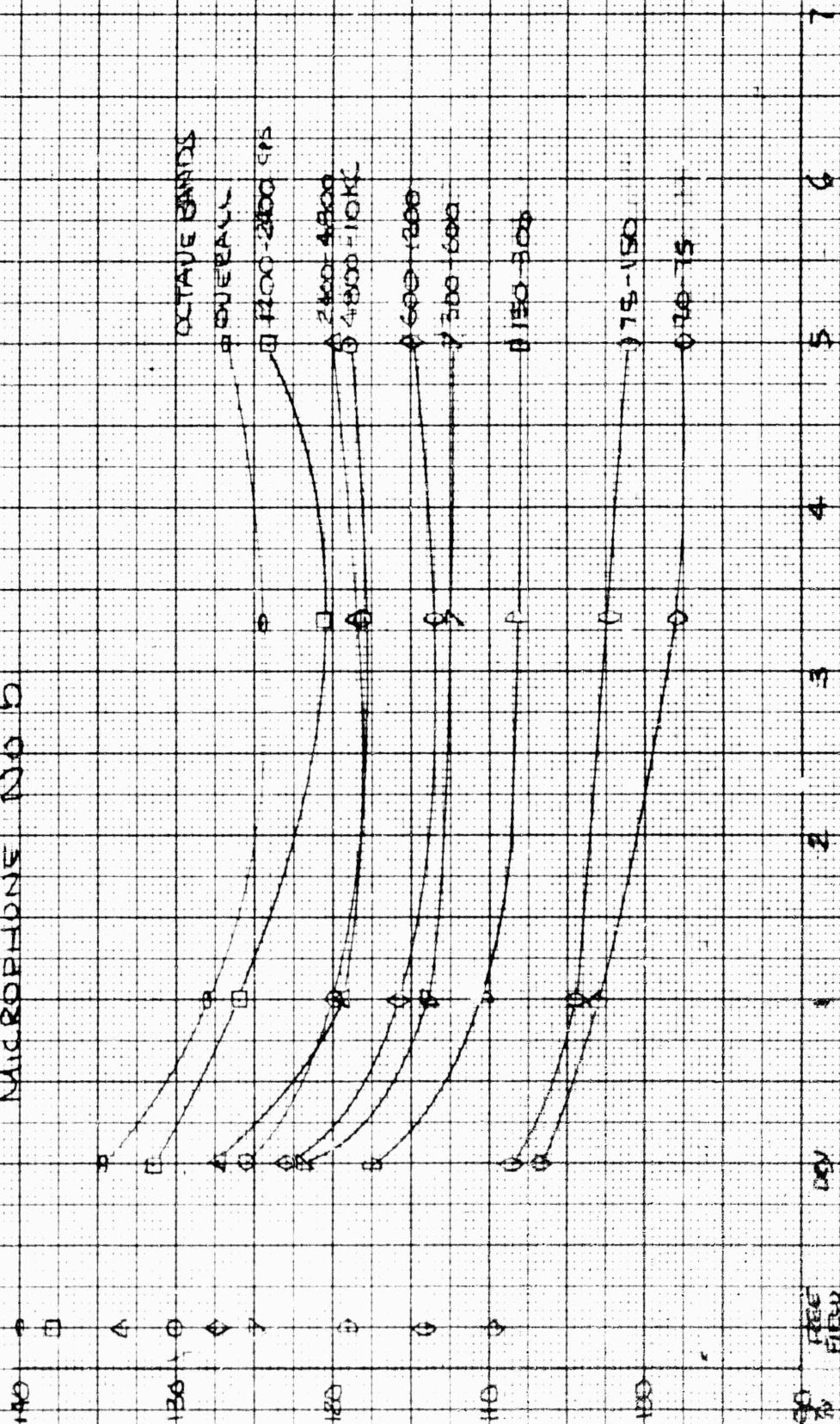
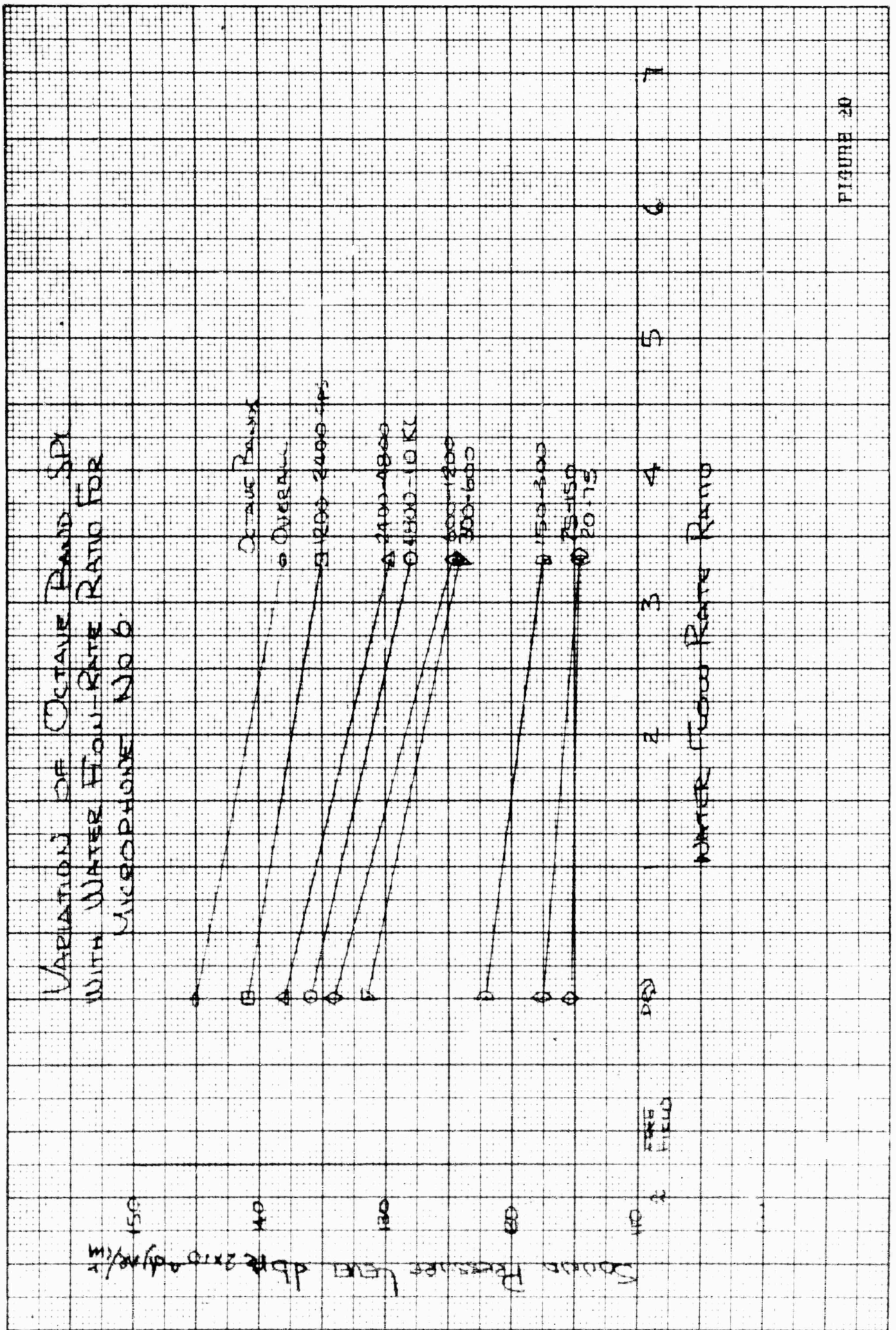


FIGURE 19

11.7022
K&E
10 X 10 TO THE 1/2 INCH
ADVANCEMENT 2
REPLIES 2
REPLIES 2



NOT REPRODUCIBLE



FIGURE 21 Flame Bucket Operation Dry Condition
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NOT REPRODUCIBLE



FIGURE 22 Flame Bucket Operation $m=1/1$
AE61-1140 Page 39

NOT REPRODUCIBLE



FIGURE 23 Flame Bucket Operation m=2/1
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NOT REPRODUCIBLE

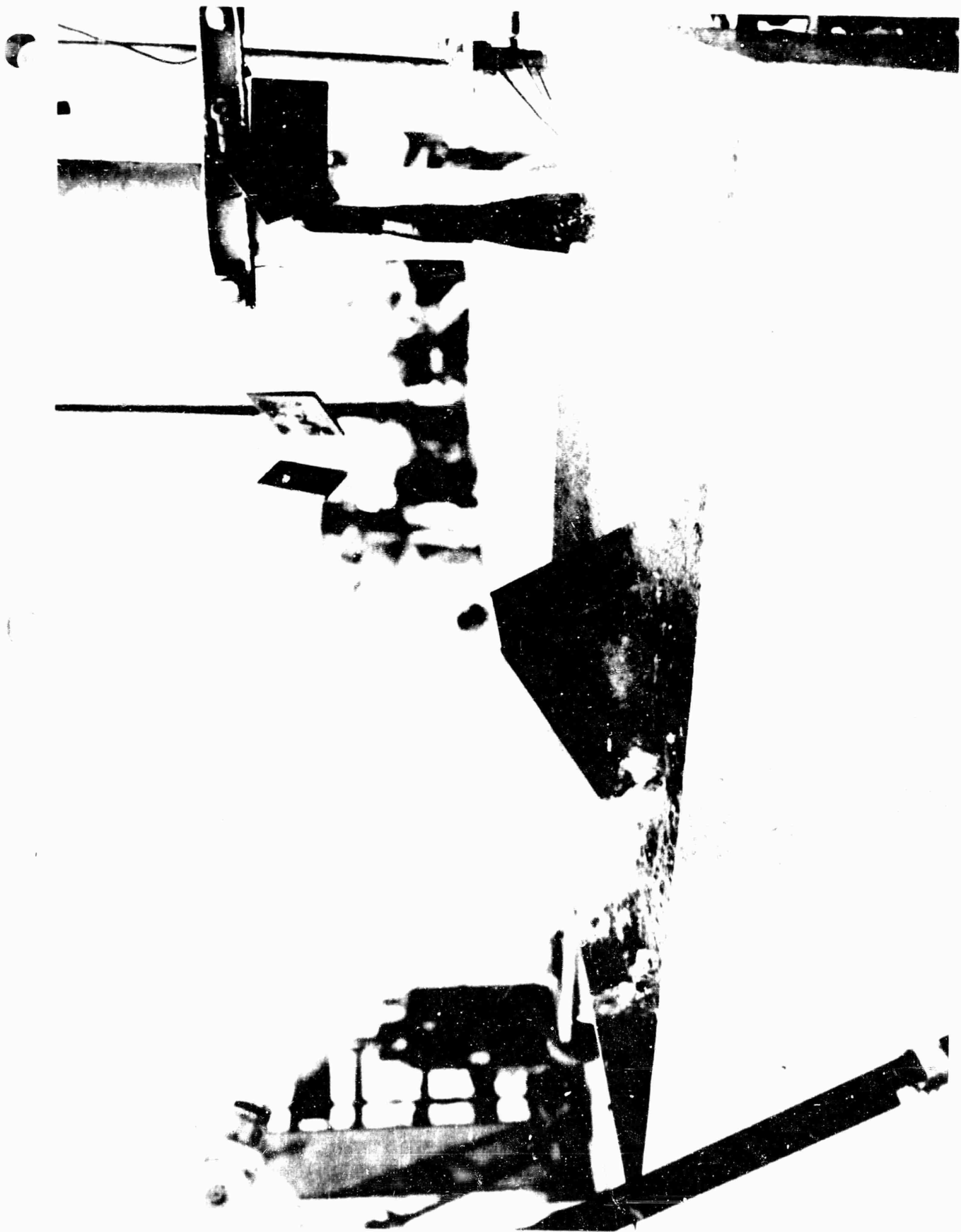
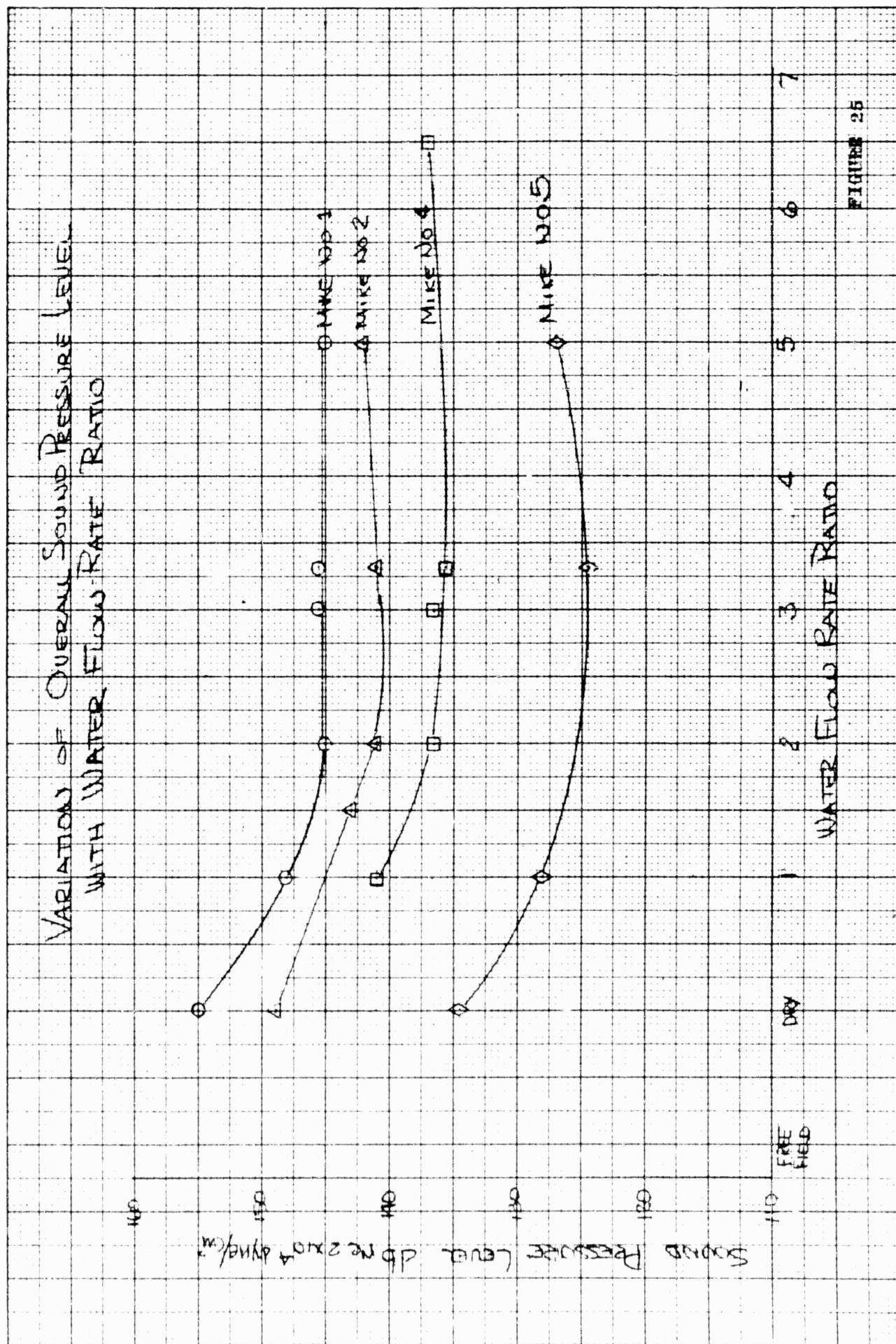


FIGURE 24 Flame Bucket Operation $m=3/1$
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11-7523 HIGH SPEED PHOTOGRAPHY
 10 X 10 TO THE 1 INCH
 2 INCHES



KEUPP & EBER CO. N. Y. NO. 288-40
Chart Engineer: M. J. Lyons - 6411-1000
MADE IN U.S.A.

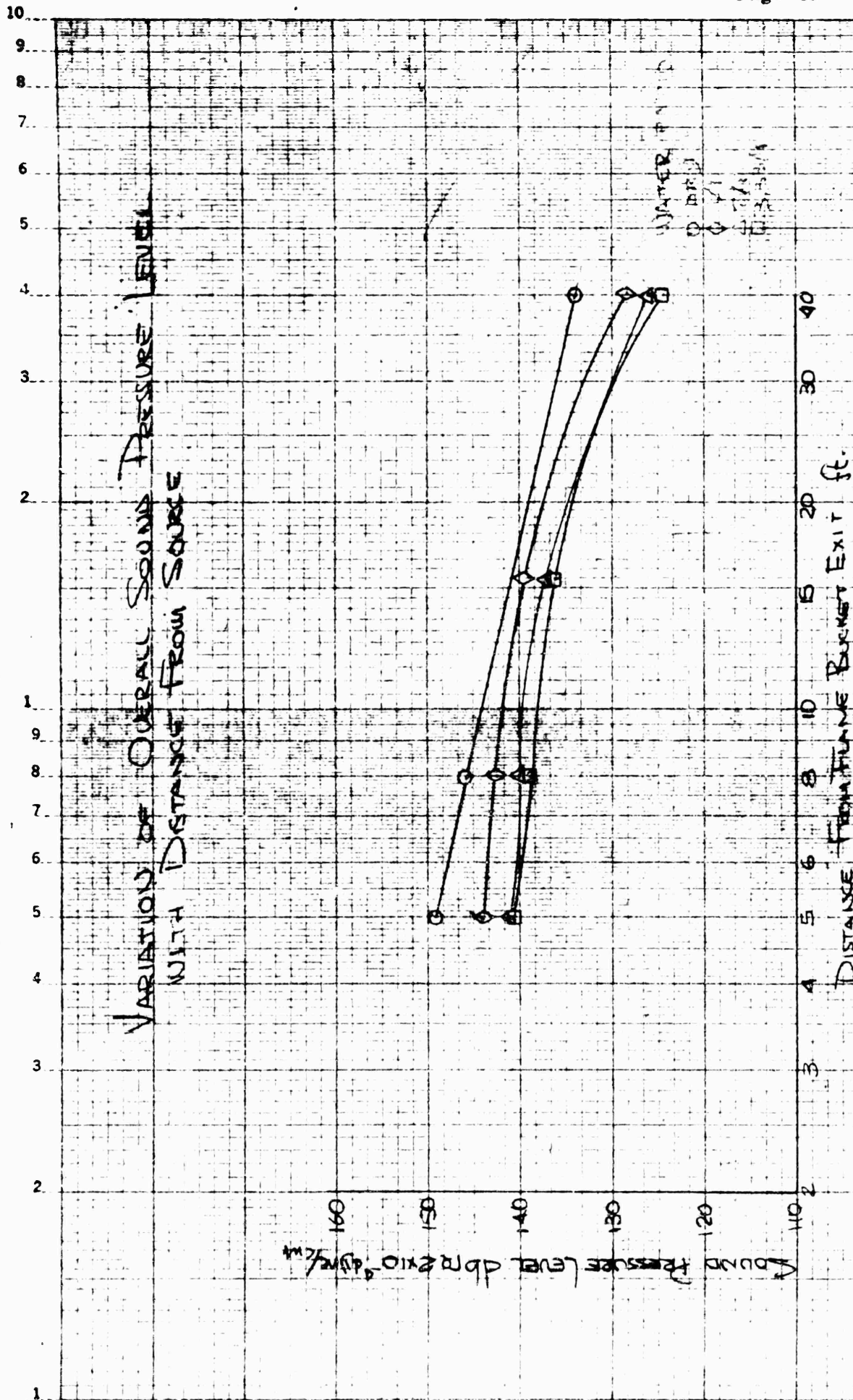


FIGURE 20

1/2" SEMI LOGARITHMIC 359-71
KEUFFEL & ESSER CO. MADE IN U.S.A.
3 CYCLES DIVISION

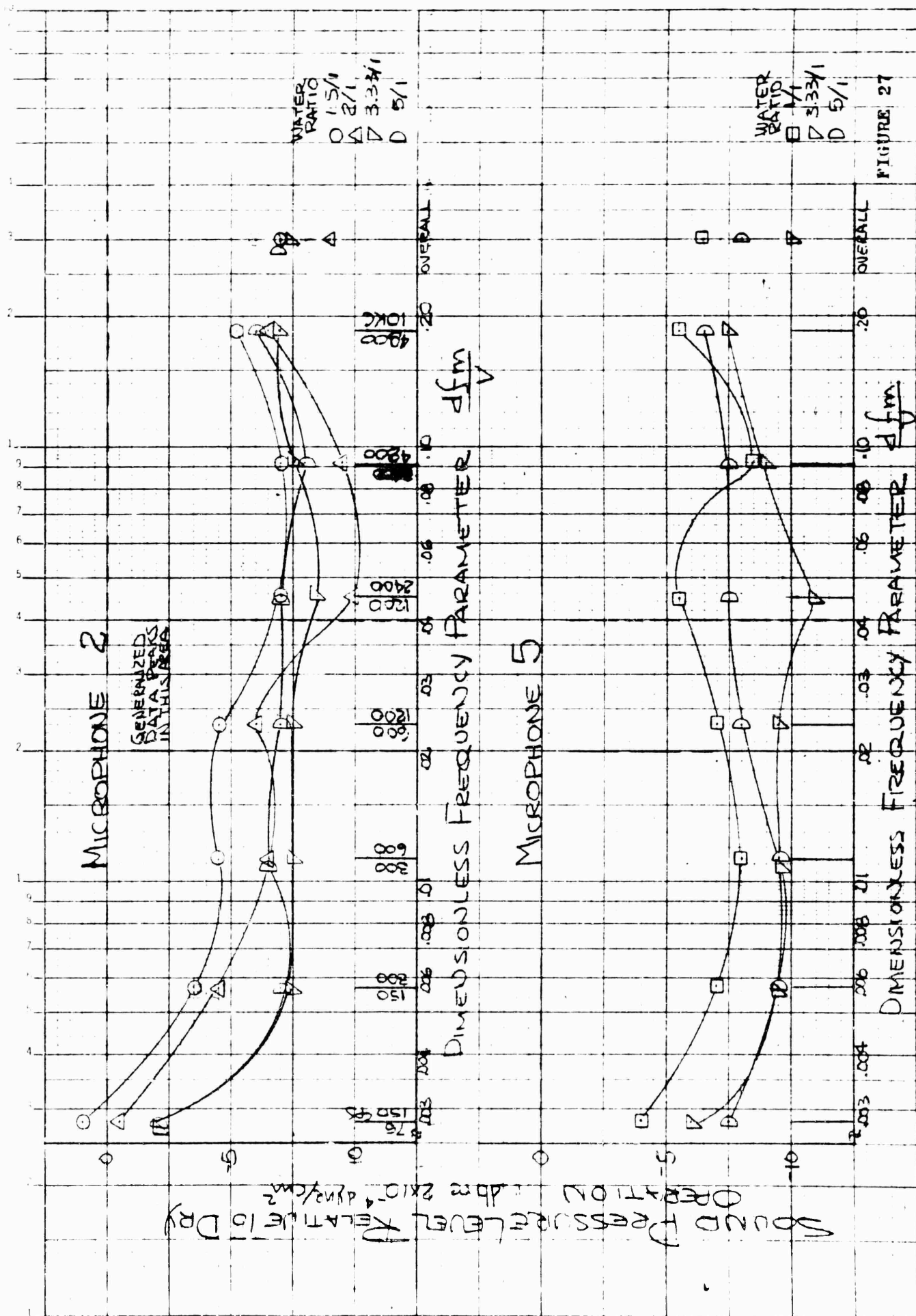


FIGURE 27